EDUCATION WITH A TRADITION

Frontispiece and tailpieces by E. M. Stevenson.

[*Frontispiece*

ST. ANNE TEACHING THE VIRGIN MARY.

ST JEROME WITH PAULA AND EUSTOCHIUM.

ST. HILDA AND HER MAIDENS.

TERESA OF AVILA AND HER BROTHER READ THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS.

ST. ANGELA MERICI, FOUNDRESS OF THE URSULINE ORDER.

MARY WARD, FOUNDRESS OF THE INSTITUTE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

MADAME DE MAINTENON AND THE GIRLS OF ST. CYR.

BL. JULIE BILLIART, FOUNDRESS OF THE SOCIETY OF NOTRE DAME.

ST. MADELEINE SOPHIE.

MOTHER CORNELIA CONNELLY, FOUNDRESS OF THE SOCIETY OF THE HOLY CHILD.

Frontispiece and tailpieces by E. M. Stevenson.

[*Frontispiece*

EDUCATION WITH A TRADITION

An Account of the Educational Work of the Society of the Sacred Heart

BY
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WITH A PREFACE BY
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UNIVERSITY OF LONDON PRESS Ltd.
10 & 11 WARWICK LANE, LONDON, E.C.4

PREFACE

I WAS first privileged to see this book before it was submitted as a thesis for the Ph.D. degree of the University of London; it opened up for me a new field of education which was further illumined by conversations with the author. I welcome its publication, since it will make accessible an important chapter in history which would otherwise remain generally unknown. Histories of education pass too lightly over, or even omit, the devoted and influential work of the religious Orders. Except for the biography of St. Madeleine Sophie,[1] and the sketch by Reverend Mother Janet Erskine Stuart, *The Society of the Sacred Heart*,[2] there is no book in English dealing with the rise and development of this great teaching Order.

The foundress, Madeleine Sophie Barat, must be numbered amongst the memorable names of education. Though of humble origin, she was led by her intellectual and organising ability, no less than by her religious fervour, to conceive and to launch this far-reaching venture. Starting in 1800 in the lowliest surroundings, the Society has spread to most countries of Europe, to North and South America, to Australia, Africa, China, and Japan. As the author remarks, St. Madeleine Sophie "gave her Society two safeguards that ensured its integrity and its continuity, namely a transcending inner spirit which gives life to its work, and a constitutional government that has enabled it to weather many a storm." The foundations were indeed laid with genius; otherwise the Order could not have preserved its original ideal and yet adapted itself to the needs of many countries and generations.

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The title of the book, *Education with a Tradition*, emphasises the most distinguishing feature of the Society's work. The foundress appeared at a critical moment, when the face of French education was being entirely changed by the Revolution. She herself was steeped in the old tradition, and this she was able to hand on ; it was a noble conception of education, which the world would have been the poorer by losing. The reader will find here an admirable account of French Catholic education, for both boys and girls, before " the Break " ; and the intimate details of Cistercian and Ursuline life are particularly illuminating.

In a day when denominational agencies are, if not suspect, certainly less powerful, it is well to be reminded of their enduring value, and of the peculiar ethos that no secular system can produce. As one who is not a member of the Catholic Church I have been much impressed by the strength imparted to education by a faith that permeates every detail. This faith is manifest on every page of the book ; but no less remarkable is the author's balanced judgment. She does not allow her enthusiasm to run away with her ; on the contrary, she has written a scholarly and well documented history in a style that is eloquent but restrained. Her book is thus a valuable and substantial contribution to the literature of education.

F. A. CAVENAGH.

MAY 1st, 1936.

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THE *writer desires to acknowledge her indebtedness to Professor Dover Wilson and to Professor Cavenagh, who, when they were at the University of London, read through the manuscript of this book ; to Dr. H. C. Barnard, whose expert knowledge of the school-world of pre-revolutionary France was constant guidance, and who was kind enough to read through the proofs ; to the Very Reverend Canon John Cooney for his advice ; to many Convents, both at home and abroad, especially to the Reverend Mother Superior of each of the following : the Convent of the Assumption, Kensington Square ; the Convent of the Faithful Companions of Jesus, Clarendon Square ; the Convent of the Holy Child Jesus, Cavendish Square ; the Convent of Notre Dame, Ashdown Park, Sussex ; the Ursuline Convent, Forest Gate, for supplying information ; to innumerable friends ; to the artist, Miss E. M. Stevenson, for the frontispiece and the tail-pieces of the book ; and to her mother, without whose help the book would not have been produced.*

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

There used to be a saying current in French University circles that the surest way of emptying a lecture hall was to announce a conference on pedagogy. In the early years of this century, however, French professors began to be aware that the saying had lost some of its truth. In northern countries, pedagogy seems to grow in fascination in proportion as metaphysic wanes in popularity, and people who regard as doctrinaire any utterance on life and conduct are very ready both to read and write on methods, statistics, and experiments in the classroom.

Among a vast number of English educational books, three, published in this century, might be chosen as representative, not only because their writers speak with the authority of wide experience and tried scholarship, nor again because each treats the subject from a vital standpoint, but because, taken together, they sum up many of the problems current in the world to-day. These are Lord Eustace Percy's *Education at the Crossroads*, Sir Percy Nunn's *Education: its Data and First Principles*, and Sir John Adams's *The Evolution of Educational Theory*. For who can look upon our elementary system with its new and much debated organisation and its unsatisfactory curricula; or upon our secondary schools working their way through overloaded programmes to University degrees; or again, on our training colleges, in a state of transition, perplexed, unscholarly, dissatisfied; who can look upon our school world and not feel with the late President of the Board of Education: these are the Crossroads at last?

And if, debating on the choice of many pathways, the student asks himself with Sir Percy Nunn at what goal he is aiming, must he not equally reflect with the writer that

"every scheme of education being, at bottom, a practical philosophy, necessarily touches life at every point. Hence any educational aims which are concrete enough to give definite guidance are correlative to ideals of life."[1]

When, again, spurred on to formulate these ideals, to fix our valuations and make for ourselves a scheme in this vast whirling universe, must we not also, with Professor Adams, scrutinise the evolution of educational theory, look abroad at different nations, societies, and institutions which have formulated their ideal in terms of life? Always we shall find that where there is the clearest metaphysic, there also are the best defined ideas on the upbringing of children and, we might almost certainly add, the greatest indifference to mere pedagogy. When the springs of life and conduct come up fresh and perennial, who trifles with the methods of digging wells?

It is an illuminating fact that while so much anxious questioning concerning schools and scholastic organisation floods our press and our libraries, there is a growing literature fragrant with the memories of age-long, public-school tradition. Among these books Mr. Lubbock's *Shades of Eton* and Mr. Parker's *College at Eton* have lately done for that School what Thomas Hughes did for Rugby and Horace Annersley Vachell for Harrow-on-the-Hill; while even Mr. Punch, who needs must play with our "Lachrymæ rerum," entertains us with what he pleases to call the "Public School Virus."[2] These wistful, tender memories, put together without argument, influence powerfully by their sense of permanence and security.

Now, if their message can thus affect us, so too can that of other institutions which enshrine their traditions not within the almighty walls of a particular house or college,

[1] Op. cit., p. 2.

[2] See *Punch* during 1933–4.

but in the rules, the social fabric, the very substance of their life. The great Teaching Orders of the Catholic Church, the Benedictines, the Jesuits, the Ursulines, have had a large, and at one time a preponderating, share in moulding the civilisation of Western Europe. We are too ignorant, in England to-day, of the spirit which animates these institutions, just as we know too little of educational developments in continental countries. With our own free, decentralised system, allowing for spontaneity and experiment at home, we take it for granted that we have nothing to learn from other more centralised organisations, and we forget how very much longer some of them have been in existence.

"It is a curious fact," says M. Bougaud in his *Life of St. Chantal*,[1] "that scarcely one of the religious orders developed and spread throughout the world until after it had taken root in French soil. St. Benedict lived and died in Italy, but St. Maurus hastened to establish himself in France. St. Columban came from Ireland, St. Bruno from the banks of the Rhine, St. Norbert from Germany, St. Dominic from Castile, St. Thomas Aquinas from Italy, St. Ignatius from Pamplona. They were all foreigners, urged by some mysterious influence to come to France . . . because the French genius, so full of brightness and vigour, is especially fitted to impress upon those works the characteristics of simplicity, charm, nobility, and greatness which attract all minds and win all hearts."

It is tempting to study the reasons which underlie this fact. Is it because, as Nisard says[2]: "the need for perpetuity and tradition is a national virtue"; or because:

[1] Quoted by H. Joly in the *Psychology of the Saints*, p. 32 of the English translation. For this and other works quoted, see bibliography.

[2] *Histoire de la Littérature française*.

" in France, the man of genius is he who says what everyone knows," that is, who gives utterance to the clear and unifying theories of a singularly homogeneous nation? Is it because, as the same writer claims, the French genius is compounded of lucidity and practical spirit, lacking perhaps in the creative fancy of northern nations or in the exuberant imagination of the south, but balanced, well proportioned, and firmly based on reason?

Be this as it may, the fact remains that the French nation early evolved a well-defined tradition of education, a tradition closely bound up with the whole fabric of its religious, social, and political life. To define and describe this tradition, and to show its life and development in an Order of women, founded at the beginning of the nineteenth century, is the object of this present work. At the time of writing, the 7,000 religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart have in Europe, America, Africa, Asia, and Australia some 160 houses which conduct elementary and secondary schools, university and training colleges. This Society was founded by Madeleine Sophie Barat, who was canonised in 1925. We shall begin by sketching the life of the foundress, though the early chapters of this work must be devoted to the long tradition which preceded her. It was her mission to appreciate, transmit, and develop the national tradition in a life of eighty-five years, amid circumstances which gave her unusual scope. The thought of her can never be far from the mind of the writer. It will be well, therefore, to give from the outset some idea of her life and of her personality.

Madeleine Sophie Barat was born in Joigny in Burgundy on December 12th, 1779. In a six-roomed house looking on to a cobbled street and overtopped by the neighbouring tower of St. Thibaut, this child of Jacques

Barat entered into a civilisation that was rapidly passing away. Even now could be heard the crash of falling worlds. Old-time institutions, whether of religious or civil life, were falling into decay ; the monarchy had lost its power ; the very authority of the Church was being questioned. Her childhood and adolescence would witness a colossal attempt at reorganisation. Truly she seemed destined to wander between two worlds—to which would she belong ?

Madeleine Sophie Barat was, by a strange interplay of circumstance, to receive an education which embodied all the best traditions of Catholic and classical learning. Enriched by the book-knowledge of a boy, and the home training of a girl, she was to be particularly fitted for giving to the girlhood of her troubled nation that solid education which alone could restore it to peace and stability. A transcendent gift would indeed be necessary if she were to transfer to the new generation all that was best and most imperishable in the traditions of the past, while at the same time keeping her eyes ever fixed on the future. If we can trust one of her biographers, this gift must have been hers. Comtesse d'Adhémar writes : " When, in her twenty-first year, she had hastily gathered together the children of those stormy days, all was disorganised, if not destroyed. Thought had lost its ballast, society its framework, national life its anchorage. Religion, exhausted by controversy, had taken refuge in a kind of wild illuminism, philosophy made for agnosticism ; the revolution in spite of momentary lulls rushed headlong from one fearful change to another. How could anyone be educated in a chaos such as this, how learn anything in the midst of so much unrest ? Madame Barat had too much wisdom to attempt to force these chaotic elements into her scheme so far removed from

the tumult of the moment. It is a curious fact that, born in 1779 and dying in 1865, she had in her nothing of the eighteenth century, with its theory worship and its sentimentality, nor of the nineteenth, so material and rationalistic. She transcends both the one and the other. Hers was a mind deeply rooted in the life of the past, and seeking to transmit to future generations the imperishable principles enshrined by tradition, a mind more in sympathy with the life of generations yet unborn than with that of her own contemporaries." [1]

Jacques Barat possessed and cultivated vines upon the slopes of the peaceful Yonne. His wife, a gentle and highly strung woman, appears to have had deep piety and some culture. Indeed, we probably find it difficult to realise how large a place was held by things of the mind in those simple French families of which the Barat household may be considered typical. In 1779, when Madeleine Sophie was born, there were already two children, a boy of eleven and a girl slightly younger.

Louis, the boy, had distinguished himself in the College of Joigny, where he was to win honours both as pupil and as master. A brilliant classical and mathematical scholar with a wide knowledge of history and modern languages, he was to show, during the troubled years of the Revolution, both maturity of judgment and force of character, and, after the storm had passed away, was to find his level in the newly re-established Society of Jesus.

Such a son would have brought culture into any home had he not, as is probably the case with Louis Barat, found it there to foster his own development. It was natural enough to make him godfather to his little sister, and certainly this event presaged a careful education for the child.

[1] *Madame Barat*, by Comtesse d'Adhémar, p. 151.

Did she show remarkably precocious talent, or was the ruthless zeal of the young mentor entirely responsible for the trend of her studies? Whatever the cause may have been, little Sophie was early plunged into the routine of the traditional classical upbringing given to the boyhood of France. Without any of the compensations afforded by the social intercourse of a school, without the help of oral teaching or of class discussion, she was introduced to the searching programme of grammar and rhetoric, themes and versions, mathematics and history, with the study of Spanish and Italian as a recreation, and the wide historical culture of all things Catholic as a background. During his years as assistant master at the College, Louis insisted upon her following his classes. The lonely little girl's exercises were ruthlessly standardised by those of boys educated in close companionship with their fellows and enriched by a social intercourse often very wide. Yet, week by week, we are told, the child stood first, reaping the reward of those hours of industry in the attic of her father's house. It was often uncongenial work, apt to weigh on a sensitive spirit and threatening to crush a nature both affectionate and lightly poised. However, the race from which she sprang seems to have been endowed with hardy qualities, and adversity was early to give Sophie Barat the endurance and inner tranquillity so essential to true nobility of character.

Dark-eyed, small and frail, but very vivacious, gentle of manner and thoughtful, Sophie passed from childhood to girlhood amid the thunders of the Revolution. The piety of a Catholic upbringing, together with the affectionate home atmosphere, had fostered in her a peculiar sensitiveness of heart which made her feel acutely the sufferings of her country and her home. Louis, already a priest, was in Paris in 1793. Summoned to take the oath of allegiance,

and misled as to its character, he first subscribed, but did not hesitate to jeopardise his life by retractation when he understood his mistake. Escaping from prison, by the timely intervention of a friend, after a long period of anxiety, he found that his mother, weighed down by grief, seemed likely to have succumbed, had not the strength and tenderness of Sophie helped her to keep her balance. A singular maturity of character was being developed in the young girl during these years about which she so rarely spoke, even with those of her first companions, who had known like sorrow and anxiety. The elder sister had married, so Sophie and her mother became everything to each other. Thus it was that Louis found her when he returned home at last.

It was not for long ; events were too stirring to allow of inaction, and the young priest soon spoke of returning to Paris and of taking Madeleine Sophie with him. It was a bitter parting for her parents, who little knew the destiny that awaited her.

It is tempting to linger over the memory of Madeleine Sophie Barat as she stands on the threshold of womanhood ; for her personality strikes one vividly at this stage of her life. Later on, when, strong in the power of silent endurance, most completely endowed and wonderfully balanced she was wholly dedicated to an absorbing ideal, she became a somewhat elusive figure whose potent influence it was not always easy to gauge.

Hers was a personality which might easily have become mythical, hers a life around which legends are easily woven when once the subject has passed away. However, legends have not been woven round Madeleine Sophie Barat, simply because her life endures to-day in the Society she was to found so soon after her arrival in Paris.

Mean as were the lodgings of the brother and sister, there was certainly no poverty of ideas or conversation among the company in which they mixed. The Paris of 1798 was a place of seething life and dynamic forces, and much that was best and most productive was known to Louis Barat. He was in touch with cultured priests anxious to bind themselves together in associations that might replace some of the institutions on which French life was wont to pivot. There were intrepid women who but recently had been risking their lives in the prisons in order to minister to, and even to rescue, the victims of revolutionary fury, and who now were anxious to devote their energies to the education of neglected children. Schools and classes were being opened in most unlikely places. There was much energy, much unselfish devotion, but the instant need was for organisation.

Bewildered, homesick, overworked, not wholly in sympathy with the somewhat harsh character of the brother whom she nevertheless revered, Sophie, far from desiring to enter the arena where scheme conflicted with scheme and the clash of interests was all around, confided to her brother her desire of becoming a Carmelite.

Louis Barat did not take upon himself to settle this question. He spoke with older and wiser men, and to one of them, Father Joseph Varin, he introduced his sister, thus opening to her a sympathetic and congenial friendship and providing her with a guide. Father Varin saw beneath the shyness of the girl, outstanding gifts and strong personality. The stirring times called for sacrifice, and so he laid before her the good she could accomplish for the cause of education, reading the will of Heaven in the circumstances that had fashioned her mind. Submissively, if regretfully, Sophie accepted the mission,

without however, foreseeing anything of its future character.

Events move swiftly in days in which there is everything to be done. Father Varin was in touch with many good women, all of them older than Sophie, and many able to bring to the task before them the experience of social work. A little Association was formed in 1800, and was sent to take charge of a girls' school in Amiens under the direction of a certain Mademoiselle Loquet, a forceful character.[1] After a preliminary trial, during which the Association found its feet and lost its undesirable members, the election to the Superiority resulted in a majority of one vote for Madeleine Sophie Barat. The Society of the Sacred Heart was founded and entered upon a career of astonishingly rapid development.

The biography of St. Madeleine Sophie has been written again and again, and so have those of her first companions, and of many of her daughters. The present volume attempts as far as possible to give an account of the educational ideas and achievements of the Society which she established. As is the case in similar congregations, the Society of the Sacred Heart has a double outlook on the great world of tradition, and the world of ever-changing life. Potent forces of the past have moulded the mind and manners of its members. The Catholic Church, the ideals of the Renaissance, the strong cultural principles and enlightened methods of such educators as Madame de Maintenon, the Ursulines of the Rue St. Jacques, the great Benedictine Abbeys, not to mention the Jesuits, richly endowed its cradle, around which played such great contemporary events; while upheavals and storms from time to time threatened its existence.

[1] See Part II, Chap. I.

In every biography, the interest lies chiefly in bringing out the interplay of character and circumstance. Such will be the interest of our present study. We shall see an educational tradition revived and made potent in a world of change and disintegration. We shall see ever new forces working upon that tradition, and shall witness its attempts to harmonise its principles with the actual conditions of the day. Mistakes are made, compromises have to be effected, difficulties press and demand instant solution. A strong central government, and a spirit that has for its mainspring unity of heart and purpose are the strength of the Society of the Sacred Heart. This unity can only be understood by those who realise something of the tradition on which it is founded. To that tradition, then, we must dedicate our opening chapters.

PART I

THE GROWTH OF THE TRADITION

Chapter I

THE TRADITION

" Le respect de la tradition, c'est la condition même de la vraie liberté d'esprit . . . un esprit libre c'est un esprit qui, s'il n'est pas esclave des préjugés du passé ne l'est pas davantage des nouveautés de son temps."[1]

THE object of this book is to study the contribution made to the progress of education by the Society of the Sacred Heart. It is proposed to try to give expression to the ideals, aims, methods, and spirit of a Teaching Order founded in France in the first years of the nineteenth century and now spread throughout the whole world.

A double difficulty faces the writer from the outset. On the one hand, there is the fact that a Teaching Order must of necessity possess a dual personality; on the other, that the book will meet with two very different types of readers.

The Teaching Order, with its view upon two worlds, and its inner and outer life, must always be something of an enigma to non-Catholics and even to those within the Church. Non-Catholics are apt to see only the many restrictions which handicap the life-work of a nun and which set apparently narrow boundaries to her horizon. Consequently, they infer that the work produced under such circumstances can be neither wholehearted nor creative. Catholics, on the contrary, often have a most exalted view of religious life, and dream fair dreams of the spiritual leisure and unruffled peace which, even outwardly, should surround those whose lives are dedicated to a high vocation. Mistakenly, they are sometimes repelled by the strain and effort and holy warfare of the Apostolic life. They have made for themselves a scandal of the cross borne by those who spread Christ's Kingdom in that way of " doing and teaching " which was the Master's own.

[1] Brunetière, *Discours à l'Académie.*

The first difficulty, then, will be to try to give expression to the personality of the Order; the second, to meet the minds of both types of readers described above. Ambitious as is the task, it is attempted here in deepest love and filial reverence for a Society which claims the utmost of endeavour and the most wholehearted service from its members.

What, then, is St. Madeleine Sophie's achievement? Briefly stated, it would seem to be this: that endowed with much insight and wisdom, she was able to grasp with true appreciation the educational tradition which the French Revolution had swept away and to hand on that tradition by means of a Religious Congregation ready, like herself, to adapt its work to the changing need of the times. Standing at the cross-roads and viewing both the past and the future, she showed a remarkable power of selection and assimilation. Moreover, she gave her Society two safeguards that ensured its integrity and its continuity, namely, a transcending inner spirit giving life to the work, and a constitutional government which has enabled it to weather many a storm.

In the present chapter we shall consider somewhat generally the traditional ideas on the upbringing of Catholic girls, ideas which were current all over Europe, but were especially active in France during the two centuries preceding the French Revolution. The next two will consist of a survey of the ideals and methods of the boys' schools of the period; for these aims and methods of necessity reacted upon the lives of their sisters. Then we shall take a glimpse into a monastery, into an Ursuline convent, and into the famous school of St. Cyr, in order to glean from these establishments the principles and practice which underlay and guided their work. Thus, the first part of

our study will endeavour to recapture and give expression to the tradition of education in France—while the second and third parts will be devoted to the development of the work of St. Madeleine Sophie and of her Order.

The homogeneous character of the French nation is largely responsible for its very definite ideals concerning the upbringing of children. In this land of clear thought and well-defined principles, no racial conflicts confused the spiritual and intellectual development. The long-assured position of the Catholic Church gave safe anchorage for thought and a deep unity in the valuations set upon the things both of this life and of the next. Moreover, the University of Paris, which had been for years the intellectual centre of Mediæval Europe, developed and diffused a system of philosophy which formed the basis for all other studies. In spite of a period of decadence through which it passed during the time of the Huguenot wars, the University of Paris, reformed first by François I, and then by Henri IV, was the mother of culture and of progress.

Paris also was the home of the Court, the point whence radiated influences that unified the social life, the manners, and the very speech of the French people. In this Court and in the princely homes which grew up around it were educated women who have dominated Europe by their complete and well-developed personalities. In the monasteries also, great types of womanhood were to be found, whether among the nuns or among the pupils preparing within the cloistered walls to face the career which awaited them outside. Nearly every Benedictine Abbey would have its school, unnoticed perhaps, because taken for granted; but through the silent years a definite tradition of character-training and mental development would be handed down,

by nuns who had themselves been educated in a serious noviceship.[1]

A starting-point for our present study is afforded by the date of the University reform of Henri IV in 1600, of which event Théry speaks as follows: "It would seem as if the reform of 1600, coinciding as it did with the establishment of a better organised government, forms a definite landmark in the development of the national culture. The minds of Frenchmen need no longer grope for intellectual food; on the contrary, we shall see them henceforth settling down to enjoy the spoils of their conquest. The University, the Church and the State, are now at peace. Future changes will but perfect the existing order until the day when an appalling cataclysm will sweep aside the social framework. And even then the destruction will be more apparent than real; for French Society, shaken to its depths, will turn again to the same elements and fuse them into an ordered whole, modifying them only to meet the spirit of the age. Moreover, it will be found that these elements have kept their original and intrinsic value. No startling innovations will be necessary in the educational world; for all that is of permanent value had been discovered." [2]

Our first task consists, then, in defining these "elements" of "permanent value." Speaking of this time, Monroe, though he exaggerates somewhat the formalism which was the worst fault of the century before the Revolution, says: "France had been, during the seventeenth

[1] See, for example, the *Life of Marguerite d'Arbouze*, Abbesse de Val-de-Grâce, 1580–1628—written by H. M. Delsart, and published by Lethielleux in 1925. Henri Brémond makes a study of this book in vol. ii of his *Histoire littéraire du Sentiment religieux en France*, p. 485. There are two seventeenth-century MSS. by Jacques Ferraige and Claude Fleury.

[2] Théry, *Histoire de l'Education en France depuis le cinquième siècle jusqu'à nos jours*, vol. ii, p. 97.

century, the first nation in the world, and during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries had passed through a period comparable with the Periclean or Augustan ages of ancient civilisations. Victorious in war, France had spread abroad her power into other continents and possessed a court more brilliant than any in modern times. The French State was the model of absolutism; French aristocracy had become possessed of all power and wealth. The French language was the language of the courts of Europe and of international communication; French literature had reached a beauty of form not then attained by any other modern language; French manners had attained a refinement and French Society a perfection in form and in attractiveness that caused them to be imitated throughout Europe as the highest product of civilisation."[1]

This was a period of authority, of a right self-confidence, of sure foundations. In spite of the many attacks made upon the guiding power of the Church, which some writers have described as cramping all originality and creative effort,[2] the facts go to prove that in this period of French history as in many another similar phase of the Church's influence, the greatest creative work of the nation was done under the ægis of the Christian Church. Religion allied with philosophy gave mental stability and set all reasoning upon sure and uncontroverted foundations. To thought thus made secure, a literary training gave brilliance, and refined manners expression. There was, at least in boys' schools, a high standard of scholarship, a scholarship that may be summarised in the pre-eminently French word

[1] *Textbook in the History of Education*, p. 535.

[2] See Boyd's *History of Western Education*, p. 269, also Davidson's *Rousseau* in the Great Educators series.

la clarté.[1] Clearness of thought and perfection of expression, accuracy and good taste, *le vrai et le beau*, were to be put to the service of goodness, *le bien*, and in order to achieve this end the educator aimed at developing all the powers of his pupil. Hence came the importance given to character training, to external discipline, and inward self-control. Harmony of development, balance, and poise are the natural result of mental anchorage, just as, in practice, fruitfulness of thought comes so often from asceticism of life.

The next chapter will give a detailed account of the traditional curriculum which French boys' schools had evolved, upon the foundation described above. It suffices to say at once that from the outset the education of boys and girls was definitely differentiated in France.[2] True there were from time to time really learned women: Madame de Sévigné was a Latin scholar; Madame de la Fayette collaborated with La Rochefoucauld; Madame de Grignan and her daughter were versed in Cartesian philosophy; La Fontaine sang of Madame de la Sablière as "Iris"; Homer found a champion against the attacks of La Motte in the famous Greek scholar, Madame Dacier. But these are exceptions—on the whole, the tradition of French educators leaned towards the view voiced in 1911 by one of the Superiors of the Society of the Sacred Heart. "The heaven of heavens is the Lord's, but the earth He has given

[1] Cf. Nisard: "La langue française . . . entre toutes les langues littéraires modernes . . . la plus propre à exprimer des idées générales." (*Histoire de la Littérature française*, p. 21.)

[2] Alfred Nettement, in *De la Seconde Education des Filles*, says: "Je ne voudrais pas affirmer qu'il y eut un système général d'éducation adopté pour les filles dans la première moitié du dix-septième siècle; mais il y eut trop de femmes remarquables dans la génération qui arriva à la jeunesse vers le milieu de ce siècle pour qu'on ne puisse reconnaître l'influence qu'exerça sur ce point la renaissance de la société qui date de cette époque" (p. 17).

to the children of men, and to woman He seems to have assigned the borderland between the two, to fit the one for the other and weld the links. Hers are the first steps in training the souls of children; . . . hers the special missions of peace and reconciliation and encouragement. . . . The names of Matilda of Tuscany, of St. Catherine of Siena, of St. Joan of Arc, of Isabella the Catholic, of St. Teresa are representative, amongst others, of women who have fulfilled public missions for the service of the Church, and of Christian people, and for the realisation of religious ideals, true queens of the borderland between both worlds. Others have reigned in their own spheres, in families or solitudes, or cloistered enclosures . . . as the great abbesses Hildegarde, Hilda, Gertrude and others. . . . These, too, have ruled the borderland, and their influence, direct or indirect, has all been in the same direction, for pacification and not for strife, for high aspiration and heavenly-mindedness, for faith and hope and love and self-devotion, and all those things for want of which the world is sick to death." [1]

It is perhaps the very assurance and quiet consistency of the tradition concerning the education of girls in France that makes it difficult for us to get a true understanding of it to-day. The happiest nations, says the old adage, have no history, and the great families or monasteries in which girls were brought up rarely left any record of the theory and practice which they took for granted. It is noticeable that even when the first real "Teaching Order" appeared, with constitutions especially adapted to the work of education, and with handbooks and manuals drawn up for the guidance of the mistresses, hardly a word of the *history* of the schools was handed down for future generations.

[1] J. E. Stuart, *The Education of Catholic Girls*, pp. 223–224.

Every Ursuline nun had her life commemorated in a brief notice setting forth the services she had rendered to her Order and the spiritual edification she had given by her example, but beyond a passing phrase to tell us that "she was particularly gifted in understanding and educating children" or that "she did much to raise the tone of the studies in her convent," all the interest of the biographers is focussed on the spiritual side of the nun's life.

And here we come to one of the most potent influences of the education given to Catholic children within a monastery or a convent, namely the fact that the school to which they belong is never the be-all and end-all of the men and women who bring them up. The children, loved and tended with unselfish care, know that they are but a part of the great life which sweeps around them, and that consciousness is a more lasting influence than would be the most perfectly developed pedagogical method. It is the spirit, the ideal, the personal worth, and the outlook of the educator which ultimately moulds and uplifts the child, and consequently in a religious house, where lives are dedicated to a higher calling and minds are occupied by a full and efficient service, a greater restfulness and width of outlook is possible than in the confines of a school which is a *school* and nothing more.

Perhaps the value and the influence of the education already given to girls in the days of Fénelon has been less highly appreciated than it might be, and that both within and without the Church. The great Bishop is in some ways responsible for this fact, for his utterances against learned women, the narrow curriculum he advocates and his strictures against empty-headed and curious girls, discourage those who do not realise the circumstances under which he wrote. If Fénelon is put into his proper setting beside

Bossuet and Molière, Madame de Maintenon, Madame de Sévigné, and the influential women of his day, so many of whom have left educational writings, it is easy to see that it was definite and living ideas about education which provoked in him a reaction from exaggerated learning. If this fact were grasped no one could write as does Boyd[1]: "The very fact that it (Fénelon's book) discussed the education of girls at all was of great significance at a time when the generous views of the Renaissance with regard to women had been forgotten, and better-class girls were either left uneducated or trained in a narrow, illiterate piety in convents."[2]

One might with as much or as little truth make sweeping deductions from the following lines that paint a very different picture[3]:

Les Femmes d'à présent sont bien loin de ces mœurs.
Elles veulent écrire et devenir auteurs.
Nulle science n'est pour elles trop profonde,
Et céans beaucoup plus qu'en aucun lieu du monde ;
Les secrets les plus hauts s'y laissent concevoir,
Et l'on sait tout chez moi, hors ce qu'il faut savoir.

Another reason why the importance of the tradition, and the fact of its continuity down to the present day, have been less well established than they might have been, may perhaps be found in the writings of some of the historians who have left us the account of the Teaching Orders that sprang up in France in the nineteenth century. So impressed were these

[1] Op. cit., p. 280.

[2] The author of *De l'Education publique*, an essay published jointly with La Chalotais's *Essai d'Education nationale* in 1763, makes sweeping assertions about the poverty of the studies in convents. Madame de Genlis, in her *Mémoires*, shows what differences were to be found, and how unjust it is to generalise.

[3] From Molière's *Femmes Savantes*, Act II, Sc. 7, ll. 585–9.

writers with the utter dearth of schools, with the chaotic elements of the world in which they found themselves, that they often wrote of the work of the foundresses and pioneers as if it were all the product of their own original thought. Certainly Monsieur de Grandmaison in the study of St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, published in 1909, simply ignores the past and sweeps aside the work of ancient convents as being out-of-date, and insufficient for the times. To establish the continuity and to put together again the links in the chain which binds past and present is not to belittle the work of a great foundress, far from it.

In conclusion, and to bridge the gulf, let us take a glimpse at the first influences brought to bear upon the educational work of the Society of the Sacred Heart. It has been seen how Madeleine Sophie Barat followed under her brother's tuition the classes of a typical grammar school. Among her first companions, Mother de Charbonnel had been educated by the Ursulines of Monistrol; Mother de Marbeuf had been trained in a Benedictine school; Mother de Terrail was a pupil of St. Cyr; Mother Duchesne had been brought up in a Visitation convent, and Mothers de Lalanne, Chobelet du Bois-Boucher, Bigeu, Grosier and Girard had all had experience in teaching before they entered the Society.[1]

The earliest plans of studies were drawn up with the help of Father Loriquet, the famous headmaster of the great Jesuit school at St. Acheul, Amiens (the writer of many textbooks), and with that of Father Druilhet, who, like him, had had a University education and was to join the newly-reorganised Society of Jesus. The Abbé Frayssinous, who later was Minister of Public Education, also took part in the study conferences of 1820. But this is going too far ahead.

[1] See *Saint Madeleine Sophie*, M. Monahan, p. 72.

Let us but add that one of the earliest extant documents relating to the schools of the Society of the Sacred Heart is a notice concerning the distribution of prizes held in September 1805.[1] A glimpse is there afforded into the subjects taught, and many influences intermingle in the little bulletin which describes the entertainment to be given, an entertainment reminiscent of Madame de Maintenon. The document also contains an account of the work done by the children, some specimens of which will be exhibited to parents. "We aim at instructing while amusing our children," it tells us, "that is, we have adopted the method so much admired by Racine at St. Cyr."

Education, how old the new!

[1] See Part II, Chap. III.

Chapter II

THE EDUCATION OF BOYS

1600—TO THE REVOLUTION

"Il n'y a de bon professeur d'enseignement secondaire que le savant éducateur, je veux parler de celui qui enseigne selon un esprit et pour communiquer cet esprit."[1]

In order to obtain a living idea of the French tradition in matters educational, it will be well to study it in those establishments which most nearly correspond to what to-day we call Secondary Schools. For although an educational ladder may be said to have existed from mediæval times, it was a ladder let down from above rather than raised up from below. The University of Paris dominated all education, and, indeed, its own faculty of arts was planned for boys destined to proceed to further studies such as theology or medicine. These courses in arts given in *Les collèges de plein exercice* were the model of other schools. They were based upon the humanities and aimed at developing those qualities of appreciation and right judgment which go to make up a complete personality. Although this curriculum was different from that of the convents, it could not but have some influence upon the development of schools for girls.

We have seen how one of Henri IV's earliest reforms was that of the University of Paris, so that after 1600 a new development took place in the sphere of higher education. To the already existing classical studies was added a new and deeper interest in literature. Textual criticism, comparative study of Latin and Greek, a more widespread knowledge of mathematics and Hebrew, biblical exegesis and theological lore gave witness to the intellectual activity

[1] F. Charmot, S.J., *La Teste bien faicte*, p. 11.

of the time. Now were founded the Jardin Royal des Plantes, the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, the Bibliothèque Royale, the Cabinet des Médailles.[1] However, as we are more concerned with the intellectual *youth* of the country, we must turn from the consideration of the University proper to what we should call "school-life."

This, as has been said, was found in those preparatory departments called *collèges de plein exercice*, of which the Jesuit Collège de Clermont (founded in 1563) was one of the oldest and most firmly established. Among the forty-five colleges of the University in 1600, many were for the education of boys, notably the Collège Cardinal-Lemoine, des Grassins, d'Harcourt, de la Marche, de Montaigu, de Navarre, du Plessis, de la Sorbonne.[2] Many others were run by religious communities, such as the Collège des Bernardins, des Carmes, des Cordeliers, des Prémontrés, des Jacobins, and by the Jesuits. Later were to spring up, side by side with these, the schools of the Oratory and of Port Royal.

What was taught in these preparatory departments? This question will perhaps best be answered by a brief account of some leading schools. Jesuit studies are familiar to us from the writings of Père Jouvancy[3]; Port Royal is depicted in the books of Arnauld and of Lancelot; the Oratory in those of Père Lamy; while life at the Collège Royal comes down to us in the vivid pages of Rollin, its professor of rhetoric.

Let us begin with *Jesuit Education*.[4] The Collège de

[1] On this subject see Théry's *Histoire de l'Education en France depuis le cinquième siècle jusqu'à nos jours.*

[2] A complete list is given by H. C. Barnard in *The French Tradition in Education*, Appendix B.

[3] Latinised Juventius and sometimes spelt Jouvency.

[4] The official handbook of Jesuit studies is the *Ratio Studiorum*, drawn up between 1584 and 1599 under the generalship of Father Claude Acquaviva.

Clermont was one of the foremost schools of the University. From the outset the Jesuits had adopted as a basis of their education the old Trivium and Quadrivium of mediæval days. Like other continental teachers, they divided their boys into ten classes, the first being the highest, but they infused a life and spirit into the work which was all their own. The boys learned grammar, the humanities (i.e. Latin and Greek) to a very high standard, rhetoric, history, and philosophy, this last comprising at first logic, metaphysics, mathematics, and natural philosophy, and finally including such subjects as "polymathie" (general knowledge), "la symbolique" (heraldry), "l'épigraphie," "la diplomatique," and "la numismatique"; theology, of course, had a place of honour.

The strange array of subjects just cited shows at once both the strength and the possible weakness of Jesuit education. The vigour of spirit and the intelligent methods of these teachers made them ideally fitted to capture and develop young minds, but this very vigour and this originality could be overdone. Wanting to interest the children and their families they could lay too much stress upon the uncommon and unimportant aspects of study to the detriment of more serious thought. Before the suppression of their schools this charge was made against the Jesuits,[1] as well as that of being too fond of dramatic performances and of spectacular pageants.[2] We may say, at once, that this love of the spectacular is one of the chief temptations of the French nation, a defect of their qualities.

[1] Notably by the lawyer, La Chalotais, in his famous *Reports on the Constitutions of the Jesuits*, drawn up for the *Parlement* of Rennes in 1761 and 1762. In this attack on the Order questions of pedagogy are intermingled with those of political bearing.

[2] For the Jesuit theory on the subject of the drama as a means to education, see Baumgartner, *Geschichte der Weltliteratur*, vol. iv, pp. 623–637; also Paulsen, *Geschichte des Gelehrten Unterrichts*, vol. i, p. 358.

Show and affectation, the development of a certain *genre* or *préciosité* and too slavish an attention to detail may spoil work, if a living spirit does not animate it. Such a spirit, however, was for the most part present in the schools of the Society of Jesus, and ensured their lasting fame.

The curriculum was planned with minute exactness so that the work was distributed evenly over the period of school life. Frequent repetitions, oral and written examinations, and public literary contests, insured thoroughness. No one was allowed to go up to a higher class until the programme of the preceding one had been mastered. If there was little variety from one year to another in the content of the curriculum, there was much latitude allowed as to the manner of treating it.

Individual aptitudes were studied carefully by these masters who, having dedicated themselves to the task of education, spared themselves no pains. Classical texts were selected and edited. There was always a good library where private reading and notetaking were encouraged.[1]

The Jesuits have been rightly famous for the interest they have given to the process of learning. One of their masters in modern times, the late Father Garrold, S.J., used to say: "If you want to make a boy like history, then you must make it more interesting than cricket." This principle was understood in the seventeenth century. The idea of emulation and friendly rivalry put life into the literary contests in which one boy would question another, each doing battle for his team. Class teaching often gave place to general discussions, where, we are told, the boys'

[1] See *Monumenta Germaniæ Paedagogica*, vols. v and ix, quoted by Hughes in *Loyola and the Educational System of the Jesuits*, where class procedure is described, pp. 202–8.

voices were more often heard than that of the master. Memory work and public declamations were in honour.

On the whole the boys seem to have had independent initiative in their work, while the masters gave a great deal of time to correcting exercises and to private coaching of individuals.[1]

In his *Méthode pour bien apprendre et pour enseigner* (1691), Père Jouvancy, S.J., develops the *Ratio Studiorum* or plan of studies of the Society. This work earned the praises of Rollin and was largely drawn upon by Père Loriquet in 1815, when the great Jesuit School of St. Acheul was being set on foot at Amiens. Père Jouvancy warns the teachers not to take it ill if a few "stickmen" (*des bons-hommes*) decorate the margins of their pupils' exercise books! With sympathy and understanding he describes the method of reciting lessons, of explaining new matter, of correcting the written work, and of conducting that running commentary upon a text read aloud which now goes by the name of *lecture expliquée*. Oral reading and declamations are to be frequently practised. Dictations must be short and interesting—all must receive a share of the master's attention. A good point is to make the boys go over the matter learned, grouping them in small numbers about a leader. There is always to be some interest on hand, whether it be the preparation of a literary meeting, a classical drama, or a historical or religious pageant. The purposive activity, advocated by the exponents of the "Project Method," was carefully stimulated by these early Jesuits, who seem to have been beforehand with many a so-called modern innovation.

[1] See Mgr. Dupanloup's *De la Haute Education Intellectuelle*, 1850; vol. i, p. 412, shows the amount of written work to be corrected each week by every form master. The time-table there given is very similar to that of any Jesuit school of the two preceding centuries.

The *Ratio Studiorum* gives, as the goal of this education, the training of the whole man by the harmonious development of every faculty—much of its intellectual fruit is included in the expression "le goût" (good taste) on which French educators have always set store.[1] If the term is taken in its widest connotation it can mean nothing less than the wisdom of Plato's ideal, the *recta sapere* of the Christian. Rollin, whose mind was in general agreement with the Jesuit tradition, was to write in the eighteenth century: "Good taste, that delicate sensitiveness to what is truly noble, is the most precious fruit of our studies. All our efforts tend towards producing it in the minds of our pupils. We strive to inspire the impressionable minds of children with the spirit that values reality rather than words, and thought rather than symbols. We aim at making them find in a well-balanced judgment an antidote to that enervating style which appeals to youth precisely because it is so frivolous. We strive to make them turn away from literature which fascinates but does not enlighten, and so to look by preference to those authors whose chaste and vigorous writing will teach them that simple eloquence which bears the stamp of truth. Thus the citizen whose mind has been cultivated by arts so worthy of man's nature, shows in all his actions a grace which betrays him, as it were, and proclaims unconsciously the education which he has received."[2]

It has been said of the Jesuits that in their anxiety to form the taste of their pupils, they were apt to pass antiquity through a sieve, thus presenting an ideal world from which every breath of evil was excluded. Lantoine in *L'Histoire*

[1] See *Loyola and the Educational System of the Jesuits*, T. Hughes, S.J., ch. vi; also *Jesuit Education*, Schwickerath, S.J., ch. x.

[2] *De la Manière d'enseigner et d'étudier les belles Lettres.*

de l'enseignement secondaire en France au dix-septième siècle complains that it is but a poor preparation for life to rob the ancient authors of their most human qualities, to read Cicero and Livy for their general outlook and their immortal sayings, and not to see beneath the matchless language a human personality throbbing with life. He complains of the long digressions and the minute grammatical studies so vividly described by Rollin. These, Lantoine thinks, make the *man* disappear under an abundance of commentaries. All this is well fitted to teach composition, but does it prepare for life? If "Latin is a gentleman," as the saying goes, it was never more aristocratic than in the eighteenth century.

In an article which appeared in the *Revue des deux Mondes* [1] this same reproach is levelled. It will, therefore, be of interest to quote it here before returning to the survey of Jesuit schools. A plea is made to give boys something more than *Des leçons de goût*, for they will have to face not a life of pleasant leisure and agreeable conversation, but a struggle for existence. The writer asks that history should be studied from its more human point of view. "Let us show," he writes, "that the great men whom we are tempted to look upon as pure spirits in the realms of literature, have lived through times as stormy as our own. That they have taken part in the battle of life and have suffered like us. These men that seem at first glance to be so serene have been buffeted by storms, and bear each one in his own heart the wounds of life's sorrows. Let us look for these wounds and discover the *man* behind the writer. Let us try to place him in his historical setting in order to understand him the better."

This is a plea for historical accuracy, for experience of

[1] 1869.

life, for reality and independence of judgment. It embodies the modern spirit which would put the young mind in touch with facts and there leave it "to judge," or else to welter in a chaos of impressions. The older method, certainly the method of the French Jesuits of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was to form the judgment, to teach the boy to sift his impressions and to refine his taste. Here, perhaps, lies the very essence of Jesuit and Catholic education, the tradition of treating a child as a child, of guarding it, training it, developing it, and only gradually introducing it to the realities of life.

Much more might be written on the subject of the formation of taste and much on the Jesuit curriculum, but as the next chapter will give in some detail Rollin's exposition of the University schools, an exposition which he himself says was in close accord with the ideas of Père Jouvancy, we will content ourselves with this glimpse into a Jesuit college, and consider briefly the inner spirit which pervaded it.

A high tone prevailed in these schools kept by men whose whole life was regulated by a lofty ideal. Reverence for authority and a few strict principles lay at the basis of the intercourse between teacher and pupils, an intercourse which tradition shows to have been happy, filial, and unconstrained. The masters were pledged by their horror of evil to an ever vigilant care of the boys, but in order not to let this vigilance be irksome they were at great pains to keep their scholars amused and occupied in ever varied ways.

The hours of study were long, too long probably, and we see the same tradition of overwork in the French lycées to-day. The Saints' days, of which there were some thirty-five in the year, brought welcome respite from

work, the burden of which was also lightened by the close touch between home and school. It has always been part of the French tradition that parents should interest themselves in the performances of their children, thereby giving to the studies a zest and vigour often lacking in English schools.

Such, in brief, was Jesuit education, which both satisfied the deepest aspirations of the French nation and also left a lasting impression upon its intellectual life. After enjoying widespread popularity and after educating thousands of French boys the Society became the subject of the most violent attacks in the second half of the eighteenth century. Accused by some of political intrigue, by others of a narrow-minded resistance to Cartesian philosophy and the new learning, by others again of an international spirit which hampered the national development, the Society was expelled from France in 1762, and suppressed by Pope Clement XIV in 1773, only to be revived in 1814 by Pope Pius VII. In the interim, its influence upon French teaching was ever strong. We shall see in the next chapter how closely akin to Jesuit methods were those of the University colleges up to the time of the French Revolution. When, in the Napoleonic era, a new scholastic system was devised, the first lycées adopted the curriculum of the Oratorians or of St. Jean Baptiste de la Salle rather than that of the Jesuits, but there seems to have been a tendency to revert to type as the century wore on. The private establishments opened by ecclesiastics in the first years of the nineteenth century were frankly modelled on Jesuit schools, notably those of the Fathers of the Faith. As it was from these Fathers that the Society of the Sacred Heart turned for guidance in the first days of its existence it is natural to find traces of Jesuit influence in its outlook and

methods of teaching. Moreover, when in 1814 the Society of Jesus was reconstituted, most of the Fathers of the Faith joined it and continued, as Jesuits, a close and most helpful intercourse with the Society of the Sacred Heart.[1]

Another type of French education is to be found at *Port Royal.* The boys' school, which originated in 1637, but can really only be said to have flourished from 1647 to 1660, marks an epoch in methodology and had much subsequent influence. The first masters were masters indeed: Arnauld, Lancelot, Nicole were among the foremost writers and thinkers of the day. Their pedagogical treatises, based upon Cartesian philosophy and couched in the purest French of that era of literary greatness, were further recommended to the world by a lofty morality and sincere disinterestedness, however Jansenistic may have been the religious outlook of the writers.[2] A girls' school had been in existence since mediaeval days. It was reorganised by Abbess Angélique Arnauld, early in the seventeenth century, and is known through Jacqueline Pascal's *Rêglemens pour les enfans de Port Royal* (1655), and the *Constitutions of the Monastery*, which were printed in 1665.

The greatest master of the famous school was undoubtedly Lancelot. Heart and soul in his work, he produced many textbooks. Among these, *La Nouvelle Méthode pour apprendre facilement la langue latine* gives its rules

[1] See Part II, Chapter I.

[2] The advance in pedagogical method due to the Port Royalists seems to have blinded some historians to the fact that as *Educators* their work was doomed to failure; their whole life-system being based on a pessimistic view of human nature akin to the most rigid tenets of Calvinism, lacked those two most necessary elements of all education, namely, *hope* and *joy*. The girls' school seems to have been even more gloomy and repressive than the boys', and yet it is quoted again and again as being "typical of convent life," even by such a scholar as Gréard.

in French (instead of in Latin as had previously been the custom), and is written with much good sense and acumen. Minutiæ are disregarded—the salient principles of grammar are embodied in a few rules and reinforced by copious exercises. But the spirit of an age imbued with intellectual optimism peeps out in the confident promise that six months will suffice to master the language. We can see Milton applauding from across the Channel, but alas! mass-production in education has taught us to be sceptical.

In *Le Jardin des Racines grecques* we find, hidden beneath a barbarous etymology, a wisdom shown notably in a criticism of Comenius's *Janua linguarum*, which is a long and tedious reader for children, so planned that no word is ever repeated twice. The Port Royalists better understood the child mind and so provided it with suitable and varied mental food and much repetition. Up to the age of twelve, the studies were chiefly carried on in French, that glorious French of the period, pure, sonorous, and conscious of its dignity, a language even then being immortalised by master writers and safeguarded by Richelieu's Academy. Through this medium the children were to learn interesting stories from the Scriptures and also history, geography, and nature study. We see the influence of Descartes in the fact that they were to be well grounded in arithmetic. It was a freer, more practical programme than that hitherto traditionally accepted, and freer too was the organisation in this one small school.

Delightful records are handed down to us. Country rambles and open-air classes suggest a pleasant intercourse between master and pupil. We must not, however, forget the pessimistic philosophy which underlay the system of these Jansenistic teachers, whose profound distrust of

human nature gave a gloomy character to their vigilance, and made it very different from the paternal supervision of the Jesuits. In this small exotic school, corporal punishment was by no means unknown and was inflicted summarily lest the delinquent should add lies of excuse to the fault committed. If there was better teaching there may well have been less personal initiative than in the schools on older lines—but it is hard to judge, for the establishment was closed after a brief career on account of its unorthodox religious views.

For the older boys at Port Royal, *La grammaire générale et raisonnée* provided a bold attempt to meet a felt need. The influence of Descartes's confidence in the all-sufficiency of reason is felt in this pioneer work, teeming with errors but heralding an advance in linguistic research. The strength of French education has long rested on the vigorous and practical study of the mother tongue, and here, long before the rediscovery of Sanscrit, before Grimm and Humboldt had co-ordinated the various branches of language-study, was an attempt to base research upon a scientific and enduring foundation.

The methods of Port Royal had a profound influence upon the Oratory schools, founded early in the seventeenth century and made known to us by Père Lamy in his *Entretiens sur les sciences*. In this book we see the same insistence on good methods of teaching, that is, a preoccupation with the actual process of exposition and explanation rather than with the class management which seeks an appealing form. The manipulation of thought, the choice of words, the gradation of difficulties, the use of concrete illustration, the principles upon which the textbooks should be built up or the classical authors annotated, these are matters discussed by the Oratorian masters, much

in the spirit of those men who produced the "Art of correct thinking."

Dr. H. C. Barnard in *The French Tradition in Education* complains that the Oratorian schools have received too little recognition. Probably this fact is due to the Jansenistic errors into which the congregation had fallen before the French Revolution, and to the complete extinction of its schools.

There were some thirty-six Oratorian colleges founded between 1614 and 1716,[1] the most famous being Juilly, Vendôme, and Dieppe. Destined originally to educate aspirants for the priesthood, these colleges soon attracted a large number of boys of every rank, who were sent thither because of the pedagogical methods and the thoroughly national character of the congregation. This national character is magnificently developed by Bossuet in his funeral oration for François Bourgoing, third Superior-General of the Order, who with the Founder, Cardinal de Bérulle, and his immediate predecessor, may be said to have raised the level of the spiritual and intellectual life of France.

The teaching methods of the Oratorian schools approximated closely to those of Port Royal, as eventually also, and to their undoing, did their religious views. Descartes was in honour in these schools, which seem to have been singularly free from central control. For while the Oratorians, in their zeal for sound teaching, evolved an unusually thorough system of inspection,[2] they left each school free to develop along its own lines and to try experiments.

[1] See Appendix H of *The French Tradition in Education*, by Dr. H. C. Barnard. From this book many of the following details have been taken.

[2] Thus the masters were inspected by the *Préfet des Etudes* of each house, and from the headquarters of the congregation a *Visiteur* was sent round to all the schools.

Latin, of course, was the chief subject taught, but the classes were conducted in French, and a *Nouvelle Méthode* written in the mother-tongue with verb-endings and inflections printed according to an elaborate colour scheme, was in use in Oratorian classrooms four years before the publication of Lancelot's *Nouvelle Méthode latine*. The congregation seems to have printed several textbooks for its own use, especially for the teaching of history, which may literally be called a "speciality" at Juilly since it was taught by only one master in a room hung with charts, maps, and chronological tables. Geography was closely correlated with history, a practice which endured for long in French schools.[1] True to its national character, the Oratory stressed French history, Père Berthault bringing out two progressive textbooks, *Florus Franciscus* and *Florus Gallicus*.

Greek was apparently never brought to a very high standard. Latin authors were studied intensively, but less value was set upon writing Latin prose than was customary in Jesuit schools. Every week there was *une composition* or Latin theme, the marks for which were recorded, hence the French term "composition" for a written examination in any subject.

As followers of Descartes, the Oratorians could not but be good teachers of mathematics. Jacques Fournenc published a textbook which included trigonometry, conic sections, the calculus, and mechanics, while Père Lamy in his *Elémens des Mathématiques* introduced his pupils to the new idea of logarithms.

The order of day in an Oratorian college did not differ much from that of other schools, except for the somewhat injudicious practice of cutting up the time into half-hour periods. Pleasant relations seem to have existed between

[1] See Part II, Chap. VI, "The Evolution of the Curriculum."

the boys and the masters, who rarely spent more than ten or twelve years in teaching, and who generally followed their pupils up the school. As they were trained in preparation for their duties and inspected in their work, and because they knew that after about a dozen years they would pass on to more directly priestly functions, the masters were enabled to keep up a high standard of efficiency and to put peculiar vigour and freshness into their efforts. Ever open to new ideas, they had set up several military academies, which on the eve of the French Revolution were offering a modern curriculum including mathematics, German, English, drawing, music, dancing, and fencing.

This curriculum approximates to that of the Christian Brothers, founded about the year 1684, by St. Jean Baptiste de la Salle, whose middle-class schools are among the most original creations of the eighteenth century. Unlike other forms of secondary education, the curriculum of these establishments had evolved from that of the primary schools which the Brothers were opening all over France. Pioneers in the sphere of elementary education, to which they brought the benefit of sound training in teaching, definite organisation, and good textbooks, the Brothers also left a profound impression upon secondary schools [1] and especially upon those for girls, which, like their own, were largely non-Latin. At Rouen they had a vocational school which gave, in addition to a general culture, specific training for commerce, agriculture, or for the Army. At Boulogne they had *Une Ecole de Commerce*, at Cherbourg a school for gardening, at Montauban they opened a public library. Speaking of the strides made in higher primary education through

[1] At the time of their suppression, 1792, there were 121 Communities of Christian Brothers in France; 920 Brothers; 36,000 pupils; six to ten secondary schools.

the efforts of the Christian Brothers, Victor Duruy[1] could say in 1867: "From this first attempt there resulted an advance in teaching which, had it been allowed to spread, would have hastened by a century the advent of vocational and adult schools."

The method book of the Order, *La Conduite des Ecoles*, was written, apparently, for private circulation and modified as the years went by. The Brothers were eminently practical, and did not indulge in much theory; nevertheless, it is remarkable how deeply their methods have penetrated into the French school world. The rigid silence, the minutely organised discipline, the walking in ranks, the evolutions performed in obedience to a wooden clapper,[2] the ceremonial attitude of children to teachers, the gravity of teachers in presence of children, the good grading of classes, the love of clear textbooks, all these and many more characteristics may be traced to the influence of the schools of the Christian Brothers. One realises that when a paternal and kindly spirit was behind this repressive discipline and, above all, when it was pervaded, as it was meant to be, by a spirit of prayer, the repression would be more apparent than real and that freedom could co-exist with minute regulation. But should this paternal and sympathetic attitude be wanting, should the regulations remain to be enforced for their own sake, then did the system become appalling and degenerate into that dismal formalism which can be the worst fault of French schools.

It would be interesting to consider other manifestations of the fertility of French educational life and especially to discuss the primary schools which were fighting their way into existence, now championed, now hindered by

[1] Quoted by J. Guibert in *St. Jean Baptiste de la Salle*, p. 36.

[2] See Dr. Barnard's *Madame de Maintenon and Saint-Cyr*, pp. 42–3 and 121.

Le Chantre de Notre Dame and by those powerful persons, the Writing Masters. Later, there was also the influence of Rousseau, whose practical ideas often penetrated even where his principles were most strongly condemned. But we must now speak of the studies in the secular schools of the University, studies which are most vividly described in the pages of Rollin.

Chapter III

A LIBERAL EDUCATION

"That only is true enlargement of mind which is the power of viewing many things at once as one whole, of referring them severally to their true place in the universal system, of understanding their respective values and determining their mutual dependence." [1]

In comparing the work of the secular colleges with that of the Jesuits at the beginning of the eighteenth century, Lantoine unjustly claims all progress for the former. The Jesuits, he contends, in spite of the varied and detailed methods in their schools, and although they treated Latin as a living language, were too much wedded to tradition, too anxious to keep up the customs of their order, and he bases his accusation on a comparison between the educational writings of Père Jouvancy and those of Rollin. Against this verdict, we may adduce that of Rollin himself, who, professor of eloquence at the Collège Royal and one-time rector of the University of Paris, gives a masterly exposition of a liberal education in a treatise which will form the substance of this chapter. The professor tells us how, when called upon to render thanks to the King for throwing the University classes open and thus making secondary education practically gratuitous, he set about drawing up a sketch of the ideals and methods pursued in the classes. Just as he was nearing the completion of his task, he discovered that Père Jouvancy, S.J., had in a former century written an exposition such as he was attempting. Of the *Méthode pour bien apprendre et enseigner*, he writes explicitly that had he known of it he would have put aside his own enterprise, so completely does it embody his principles and practice.[2]

Nevertheless, one can be glad that Rollin was not

[1] Newman, *Idea of a University*.

[2] See *De la Manière d'enseigner et d'étudier les belles Lettres*, Discours préliminaire.

deterred from publishing his book, printed between 1726 and 1728, for, besides its intrinsic interest and decided educational value, it helps to prove how very similar were the methods of the different schools of the University, and consequently it enables one to formulate a common tradition in French education. To Rollin's work the great men and women who faced the task of reconstruction after the era of Revolution often turned for hope and mental stability. We have only to compare with it a book such as Monseigneur Dupanloup's *De la Haute Education Intellectuelle*, published over a century later in order to realise how very truly the spirit of Rollin outlived the storm.

In his introduction, the writer lays down clearly the threefold aim of education in its relationship with learning, with morals, and with religion. Stressing from the outset the necessity for suitable mental and spiritual training, he shows the value for the adolescent of Bible reading and of systematic study of Christian doctrine. Boys are made to learn, regularly each day, three or four verses of scripture, a practice long universal in French schools and practised still in those of the Sacred Heart.

Rollin's treatise is divided into a number of books, the first of which is concerned with the mother-tongue. One sees the influence of Port Royal in his insistence that it shall receive the same attention and the same honour as the study of the classics. He points out how futile it is to rely merely upon everyday usage in order to give a boy real mastery over his own language. On the contrary, from the study of spelling (in which there are to be regular contests), to the deepest aspects of grammatical lore, he would have the growing schoolboy thoroughly trained and educated. For *la lecture expliquée* (he does not yet use the

term), he advocates a quaint list of books as making an appeal to young minds. Among these he mentions *Les Figures de la Bible*, *L'Histoire abrégée* of Bossuet, *Théodose* (a biography by Fléchier, much recommended by Madame de Maintenon), *L'Histoire de l'Académie française* by M. Pellisin, and Monsieur de Fontenelle's *Histoire du Renouvellement de l'Académie des Sciences*, a work, he tells us, which the boys find extremely attractive both on account of the elegance of the style and the variety of its contents. These might be varied with panegyrics and funeral orations, the tragedies of *Esther* and *Athalie*, the essays of Nicole, Pascal's *Pensées*, and even the logic of Port Royal. The sturdy generation which could assimilate such mental food might be thought able to dispense with the art of pedagogy. Nevertheless, this first book abounds in shrewd and far-seeing advice. The masters were to know exactly what they expected the boys to derive from their reading. These fruits are chiefly: knowledge of the language, knowledge of history, miscellaneous information, the acquisition of good moral principles, and finally the development of the love of reading, which can be considered the chief mark of a good education and the greatest help to morality.

In this first book Rollin enters very thoroughly into the methods of teaching Latin and Greek. He examines questions of grammar and syntax, the choice of authors, word-study, pronunciation, composition, and rhetoric, speaking always with a moderation that is of itself convincing.

In the second book, when discussing poetry, the author must needs touch upon the question, as old as Plato, of the morality of putting pagan authors into the hands of young children. He pleads for a discriminating use of the classics

in order to develop that taste (*le goût*) which is to him the end of education. He becomes lyrical when he is on this theme, summing it up in one untranslatable phrase: "Le goût est un discernement délicat, vif, net et précis de toute la beauté, la vérité et la justesse des pensées et des expressions. . . ." The reader is here brought face to face with one of the eternal elements in French education. There is in Rollin's views something redolent of a da Feltre, or a Newman, the pure breath of Christian humanism.

Rhetoric is the subject of the third and fourth books. In them we find detailed advice on the difficult art of teaching composition.[1] After quoting Quintilian, the author gives some spicy details of his own procedure. The idea of giving a prize for a weekly composition, on a date fixed beforehand but not made known to the candidates, is surely an ingenious way of keeping up the level of production in those periodical exercises which can so easily become a matter of lifeless routine. The boy never knew if he were not actually competing for the reward, and the suspense added zest to every essay.

Rollin approved of careful selection and grading of classes. He would separate weak students from the more gifted "in order to give them a chance." He describes the use he makes of oral exercises and classical models. Each composition is carefully prepared by a preliminary discussion, after which the boy first makes a skeleton outline and then writes his essay. This is by no means the end of his work. Passages on similar subjects are then culled from the classics and carefully compared with the young writer's production. An analysis is made of the

[1] Compare the Oratorian method of which Dr. Barnard says: "In the early stages of writing proses, the master first of all worked out the translation from French into Latin, *viva voce*, and the pupils afterwards made their written copies" (*The French Tradition in Education*, p. 160).

content of such passages, their sequence of thought, and their style. By such studies, judgment and appreciation are trained as well as the power of expression. This thorough teaching is advocated both for the classics and for writing French. It has lived on and holds an honoured place in the upbringing of French boys and girls for whom *le style* is a fundamental subject of the curriculum. French children have ever received a training in speech and writing before which our desultory language-study pales into insignificance. Letter-writing, narrative, public speeches, and imaginative compositions are systematically studied to-day as in the days of Rollin. This accounts for the often-mentioned fact that Frenchmen really have a mastery over their own language, and that they are able to select their words with a forceful precision that both evidences and helps to foster a habit of accurate thought.

Another very characteristic subject of French education is discussed in the fifth book, namely history, which since Bossuet's *Traité de l'Histoire Universelle* had been receiving more and more attention.[1] In the pages of Rollin we see it chiefly considered as a means of fostering ideals and a lofty outlook upon life, of developing judgment and knowledge of men and things. The scientific spirit, so predominant in our present-day treatment, is wholly absent from these lines, which speak of history as of the great school of morality for all mankind. It is the school which teaches more forcefully by example than by persuasive words, that there is nothing greater or more praiseworthy in life than honour, that uprightness is to be valued above

[1] Thus, speaking of Henriette de France, the great orator had said: "C'était le dessein d'avancer dans cette étude de la sagesse qui la tenait si attachée à la lecture de l'histoire. Elle y perdait insensiblement le goût des romans et de leurs fades héros, et soigneuse de se former sur le vrai, elle méprisait ces froides et dangereuses fictions" (*Oraisons funèbres sur Henriette de France*).

all perishable things. "I would have," says Rollin, "history to be the child's first master, since it is so well fitted both to instruct and to amuse the young. I would let history enrich the children's memories with a thousand pleasing and useful facts, or stimulate their natural curiosity until a taste for serious work has been insensibly developed."

There are paragraphs in this book on "la solide gloire" (is this a breath from ancient Rome or from the Court of Le Roi-Soleil?). Other passages treat of possessions, reputation, power. One can imagine the discussions which these subjects would have provoked, discussions rich in the opportunities they offer to the master to give right principles and a wide and noble outlook. The basic principles of morality, of social and political life, would offer matter for varied treatment, but would chiefly be valued as a means of seeking truth. What was the cause of the downfall of this schemer, the rise to fame of this administrator, the failure of that empire? What elements of weakness were there in this institution? What are the things worth striving for in life?

The course of studies is outlined for the whole career of the schoolboy. Sacred history was to be the foundation upon which to build a knowledge of the ancient world, Egyptians, Persians, Greeks, and Romans. Then was to follow a masterly survey that embraced all Christian civilisation and viewed the French nation in its right setting among other races and in its relations with the Catholic Church.[1] It was such a course as this that Père Loriquet, S.J., outlined for St. Acheul, and afterwards established in the

[1] Cf. F. Charmot, S.J.: "Le Christianisme . . . est une force vitale douée d'un merveilleux pouvoir d'assimilation universelle. . . . Ses fruits propres sont ces surhommes qu'on appelle St. Basile, St. Grégoire, St. Jean Chrysostome, St. Augustin. . . . C'est là où l'humanisme complet atteint son sommet. . . ." (*La Teste bien faicte*, pp. 244, 245).

schools founded by St. Madeleine Sophie. This study of history, a characteristic feature of French education, has always been looked upon as a most precious inheritance by the Society of the Sacred Heart.

Two main ideas emerge from the sixth book on the teaching of philosophy, under which title are grouped a variety of studies. These can be placed in two categories, namely those pertaining to philosophy proper, and those which may be called nature study.

The French tradition, coming down unbroken from mediæval days, in all its changes and developments has never lost its appreciation for philosophy. The homogeneous character of the nation has made it possible, at least to a great extent, to give a certain broad philosophic basis to the education of its growing boys and girls. This common meeting-ground may largely account for the unifying tendency of French culture which brings together those who have drawn their knowledge from similar sources, whatever may be the superficial differences of outlook or of training. It would take too long to discuss this point fully and it may be but a personal view, but certainly the writer has been impressed when among Frenchmen to see how much at home they are with one another when discussing things of the mind, how often they seem to have been brought up upon identical text-books, and what frequent points of contact their education has provided.

A study of the elements of philosophy,[1] that is of the basic principles of logic, ethics, psychology, and ontology, have ever formed a staple part of the curriculum, providing

[1] Cf. La Chalotais's views on the philosophic spirit which should pervade all the teaching of the upper classes; "a spirit of illumination, useful for everything, applicable to everything, which relates each thing to its principles" (*Essai d'Education nationale*, p. 156).

a safe and reassuring basis to literary and historical questions and a sure foundation to religious discussion. Such studies are to be found in girls' schools and were early adopted by Mother Barat and her daughters.[1]

The term philosophy had, however, even in the days of Rollin a suspiciously elastic connotation. We have seen, in the last chapter, how general knowledge and heraldry might be found ranging themselves under its noble banner. Rollin, therefore, is in no way unorthodox when he dilates here upon his views on "la Physique des Savants," that is astronomy, cosmography, and geography, and on "La Physique des Enfants" or nature study.

Very charmingly does he describe this last. It is a study which, he says, asks only for eyes, and therefore is open to everyone, even to children. We have but to observe all the marvels that nature presents to us and to *admire* them without attempting to enter intimately into their causes. . . . Wonderful is it, he continues, to see how much children will learn to profit by the opportunities which they themselves discover. A garden, a stretch of country, a palace, are each, as it were, an open book to them, but they must have learned the art of reading therein. Nothing, for instance, is more commonplace than linen, or a piece of bread. Nevertheless, how rare is it to find a child who knows how one or other is prepared? We feel that John Dewey might be speaking here, and so too when we read what Rollin has to say of the lessons to be learned from bird and beast and fish.

The last books of the famous discourse treat especially of the government of the college, the duties of the principal, and the relations between master and boys. It is a very dignified picture that is drawn and one that makes one

[1] See Part II, Chap. VI, pp. 176–8.

realise how much educative value there could be in a life among numbers, where all lived more or less in public, ate in a common dining-hall, studied in a common study-room. Such a life could indeed have most serious drawbacks when roughness was allowed to creep in, but the description before us is invested with an almost Roman dignity. The masters are warned to speak sensibly and courteously even to the youngest boys; for children appreciate and respond to such treatment. Very great care is to be taken of their physical well-being and of the order and regularity of the house. The boys are to be kept interested. The principle of emulation is recognised and approved, but the harassed rector is definitely against dramatic performances.

In the first place, he pleads pathetically, let not the rector be asked to compose the tragedies! He has neither the time nor the art of a Racine. Then he dilates upon the hardships of rehearsals which, he says, nearly kill the masters: "Declamare doces, o ferrea pectora, Vetti."[1] These performances lead to neglect of work, and to much expense, while they allow the boys to get out of hand. The small advantage reaped from them does not outweigh the drawbacks. Seldom is really good acting possible of attainment. Truly this is the mellow wisdom of one who has suffered, and who has seen how the taste for the spectacular, if not controlled, may in the long run nullify all earnestness and thoroughness in study.[2]

Rollin speaks in a lofty strain on the subject of piety and religious teaching. He would have this be very clear and far-reaching, and he advocates making the pupils draw up their own clear summaries. One is insensibly reminded

[1] *Juvenal*, 7, ll. 150–1.

[2] Similarly the Oratorians laid down rules against the acting of plays. A literary "Academy" or *Exercices littéraires* was to be preferred to these whenever possible.

that "tout ce qui n'est pas clair n'est pas français," and that the Frenchman desires to be able to render an account of the faith that is in him as clearly as of any other of his logical well-defined convictions. He tells us that he has seen these summaries in honour in many of the parishes of the capital, and that even young girls are capable of drawing them up excellently well.

It is said somewhere of an eminent French writer: "Il avait le génie de tout comprendre." These words might well be applied to the wise and noble-hearted man who has drawn up so vivid a picture of the educational ideals of his country. All that was best and loftiest and most cultural in past tradition seems to have been valued and assimilated by him into a complete and harmonious system. His book must have been the guide and consolation of those many men and women who, like Madeleine Sophie Barat, turned to build up Jerusalem again after the storm had swept away the glories of the past.

Chapter IV

IN A CISTERCIAN ABBEY

"On ne peut espérer rien de fort bon d'une femme, si on ne la réduit à réfléchir de suite, à examiner ses pensées, à les expliquer d'une manière courte, et à savoir ensuite se taire. . . . Pour le gouvernement domestique, rien n'est meilleur que d'y accoutumer les filles de bonne heure; donnez-leur quelque chose à régler à condition de vous en rendre compte; cette confiance les charmera." [1]

WHEN St. Peter Fourier was founding, early in the seventeenth century, a new teaching congregation,[2] he could find no better way of training the first members than by sending them for a prolonged stay with the Canonesses of Poussay. From these religious the young aspirants were to learn, as M. René Bazin puts it [3]: "Whatever they had to teach of art or letters . . . and also those indefinable qualities which can hardly be acquired from books but are transmitted, one can hardly say how, from spirit to spirit; namely, unfailing good taste, refinement of speech, a noble carriage, true simplicity and that ease of manner and conversation which characterises well-bred persons in the most diverse and unforeseen circumstances."

To the education given in the old monasteries we shall now direct our attention with the view to studying the tradition that has come down from the first ages when Paula and Eustochium studied Hebrew under St. Jerome, or when St. Lioba established the reign of poetry and grammar in her eighth-century monastery in England.

Never had convent life counted for so much in any nation as it did in the France of the seventeenth century. "A convent," says Gréard,[4] "was the refuge of the first years of life as it was the last. Women went to convents to

[1] Fénelon, *De l'Education des Filles.*

[2] Sisters of Notre Dame, known as *Les Oiseaux.*

[3] "Un Monastère de St. Pierre Fourier," *Les Oiseaux*, p. 46.

[4] *Education et Instruction*, vol. ii, p. 161.

learn to die, as they had been to them to learn how to live. A girl was never too young to be sent thither, whether on account of a death in the family, of a sudden departure, or any other untoward event. . . ."

If convents were never so much in honour, they were, perhaps, never so varied in moral tone or in intellectual level, and to discriminate between them must ever be a hopeless task for the historian. Sweeping generalisations are obviously unfair, but records are so rare and so wanting in precision that it is only now and again that one can get from a contemporary account a glimpse into the life of one or other. Two such pictures from the pen of Madame de Genlis form a most instructive contrast.

Of a monastery in the Rue Cassette, Paris, where she stayed as a girl, she writes: "I conceived, when in the monastery of the Precious Blood, a deep veneration for religious of austere orders (these nuns followed the rule and practised all the austerities of Carmelites). I had an equal respect for their piety and for their holiness of life which surpassed any words of mine. They were happy because they belonged wholly to God. There, one met with no intrigues, no jealousies, no gossip. These holy women were ever occupied in prayer, in care of the sick or work for souls." [1]

Of the Abbaye d'Origny-Sainte-Benoite, not far from St. Quentin, Madame de Genlis draws a very different picture. The abbess, who lived in a private apartment, entertained numberless visitors, or gathered around her a small coterie chosen out of the community. Division and sometimes strife, worldliness, and emptyheadedness characterised the convent, which yet afforded the girls a certain education merely from the social intercourse, and which was kept

[1] *Mémoires sur le dix-huitième Siècle et la Révolution française*, vol. i, p. 151.

from base intrigues by the religious influence which was felt, in spite of all, " La religion était là, entre deux, adoucissant et pacifiant tout." [1]

The correspondence of Madame de Maintenon also throws light upon existing conditions. She writes of the abbess of Gomerfontaine: " Our Abbess has such a large household to manage, she is so remiss in following up her girls and has so little authority over them; moreover, she so often changes the confessor, that it seems to me difficult for her to bring up properly the children entrusted to her care."

The vast number of books on the education of girls, which at this time began to be a subject of absorbing interest, testifies to the fact that there was a great deal of dissatisfaction as well as very definite ideas on the subject. In addition to the well-known works of Fénelon and Madame de Maintenon we may mention the Abbé de St. Pierre's *Projet pour perfectionner l'Education des Filles*, Père la Chaise's *Instruction Chrétienne pour l'Education des jeunes Filles* (1687), and Madame de Lambert's *Avis d'une Mère à sa Fille*.[2] These and many more abound in theories. Let us now turn to a concrete example and from a picture of a Cistercian abbey let us derive some idea of the education traditional in monastic houses. Our example is not chosen for the fervour of the convent or for the excellence of the teaching, but rather because an authentic diary enables us to reconstruct with singular fidelity the daily life of the school

In 1789, *l'Almanach Royal* counts 293 abbeys of women, a large number of which had schools for girls, of noble family chiefly, although there was already some mixing of

[1] *Mémoires sur le dix-huitième Siècle et la Révolution française*, vol. i, p. 172.

[2] Mgr. Audollent makes a short study of these works in *L'Ecole* for 1932–3.

classes. Thus, at the abbey of Beaumont-les-Tours, where the young Princess Louise de Bourbon-Condé spent some years, she formed a special friendship with the daughter of a country doctor, who like herself was being educated within the abbey walls.[1] However, no admixture was allowed in the great Cistercian Abbaye-aux-Bois, Paris, Rue de Sève (now called Sèvres), when in 1771, Hélène Massalska, the orphaned niece of a great Polish nobleman, was entered as an eight-year-old pupil.

The child, destined one day to be Princess de Ligne, and later Countess Potocka, saw her name enrolled among the greatest in the Kingdom of France; for this monastery, which in recent years had had a d'Orléans and a Richelieu for abbess, drew its personnel, both nuns and children, from the foremost families of the land.

The schools of the great Benedictine and Cistercian abbeys, while forming an integral part of the life lived within the monastery walls, were always but a secondary element in that life, and perhaps for this very reason were particularly adapted to widen and ennoble the child-mind. The atmosphere of dignity and aloofness, the spiritual and liturgical preoccupations which made up the tide of thought and volition surging around them, were likely to make a deeper and more lasting impression upon children than can be produced by the humdrum events of a school that sees no farther than its classroom. It is in itself an education to live with people who have ideals and interests that one can but dimly guess, and to lose oneself in a fuller, richer, corporate life. It is easy to see that a wider outlook and a truer sense of proportion could, in favourable conditions, be more easily engendered by such a system than by the

[1] See *La dernière des Condé*, Marquis de Ségur.

narrower and more self-conscious environment of a typically modern school.

With ideal conditions, however, we are not presented in the vivacious diary which Hélène Massalska began keeping at the age of nine or ten, and wrote regularly for four years (1773–7).[1] It is true that the after-career of this observant onlooker hardly wins our confidence, and we do not feel we can trust her judgments of all she saw around her. Frivolous even as a child, and without a spark of supernatural insight, Hélène nevertheless draws with precocious clarity the picture of a monastery in a state of incipient decadence. Worldliness and love of the spectacular have invaded its walls, and although a certain outward and traditional austerity, coupled with sentimental piety, give it a superficial spiritual life, it but awaits the first blast of rationalism and persecution in order to crumble into decay. So minute, however, is the schoolgirl's account of her daily life, her studies, her mistresses, and her companions, that we cannot but yield to the temptation to reproduce it briefly in these pages in order to reconstruct a whole tradition from this one example, though not of the best.

Certain political reasons caused the Prince-Bishop, Hélène's uncle, to bring her at an early age to this Parisian convent. The homesick, tired, and frightened little heiress, already self-possessed enough to have resolved not to speak any French until she could do so with sufficient dignity, was conducted first into the abbess's apartments in order to be presented to the noble ruler of the great household.

Under her tired eyelids the child noticed the gilded cornices, the spacious rooms, the nuns in attendance, and,

[1] See *Histoire d'une Grande Dame au XVIII Siècle*, by Lucien Perey. The writer, a woman, who uses the above pseudonym, gives in the introduction to vol. i the facts about the diary, which is now kept in the Château d'Oron et de Paris.

above all, the regal manners of the abbess. She records her first impressions minutely when two years later the diary is begun. We hear of the dormitory in which she slept for a while until, like many another of the pupils, she was allotted her own suite of rooms and her four waiting women, who tended her until she left the convent on her wedding-day.

Before joining her companions, the little foreigner was made to don the uniform, a black dress, such as would not be tolerated in an orphanage to-day. Its sombreness struck sorrow into the worldly little heart until the pale blue ribbons, the distinctive badge of her " class," came to cheer her with their touch of brightness.

Each class was thus distinguished by a special colour. Hélène's, which was composed of all but the very youngest children, ranged in age from seven to ten years. After the eleventh year the children were moved into *la classe blanche,* where they spent the period of preparation before making their first Communion, a solemn event in the life of any Catholic child, marking as it does a definite stage in mental and spiritual development. *La classe rouge* contained all the older girls, and was the one in which the pupils stayed the longest.

From this organisation it will be seen that the term " class " did not connote the well-assorted and well-graded group of children for which the educators of the last century sighed and sighed in vain. It corresponded rather to that method of vertical classification, popular in America, which presupposes instruction in small groups or to individuals. The class was a regular family under the care of one chief mistress who seems to have had full charge of the material, intellectual, and moral well-being of the children, without, however, interfering with the strong

influence of the headmistress, or mistress-general, of whom more will be said later.

Two or three subordinate mistresses, with an army of specialist teachers (seculars who came from outside) helped in the upbringing of the fifty or sixty pupils of each class, while fifteen lay-sisters were dedicated to their service. At the time when Hélène first entered the abbey there were some seventy-three choir nuns, one hundred and four lay-sisters, a few novices, and about one hundred and seventy pupils within the convent walls. The order of day was as follows :

7.	Rise.	12.	History and Geography.
8.	Study the Catechism.	1.	Dinner and Recreation.
		3.	Writing and Arithmetic.
9.	Breakfast.	4.	Dancing.
9.30.	Holy Mass.	5.	Goûter and Recreation.
10.	Reading Class.	6.	Piano or Harp.
11.	Music.	7.	Supper and Recreation.
11.30.	Drawing.	9.30.	Retire to rest.

All the subjects mentioned in this list, with the exception of religion and the elements of reading and writing, were taught by outside masters, and those of the best. For instance, elocution and oral reading were under the care of Molé and Larive. The dancing lessons included difficult ballets for which the services of Noverre, Philippe, and Dauberval, the first dancers of the Opera, were requisitioned. All these masters came on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. On the other days, the younger girls studied with their mistresses and learned botany and nature study, which, considered as graceful accomplishments, were taught by nuns in the peaceful gardens of the abbey.

Much of the time of the older pupils was, however, given to household duties.

A strongly paradoxical feature of this convent upbringing has left an indelible mark on the tradition of French education, namely the practice of combining the lowliest domestic avocations with the amenities and accomplishments more suitable, it might be thought, to the aristocratic names upon the register.[1] Hélène describes for us how Mlles. de la Roche-Aymon and de Montbarrey counted the linen and put it away carefully in the cupboards, Mlles. de Beaumont and d'Armaillé added up the household accounts, Mlle. d'Aiguillon mended vestments, and Mlle. de Barbantanne took her turn at the lodge. Sugar and coffee were under the care of Mlle. de Latour-Maubourg, and cooking was the special talent of Mlle. de Vogüé. Mlles. de Talleyrand and Duras acted as errand boys to the community, while Mlles. d'Uzès and de Boulainvilliers supervised the sweeping of the dormitories. If workmen were needed, one had to apply to Mlle. de Saint-Simon or to Mlle. de Talmont. The lamps of the household (no sinecure) were lit and tended by Mlles. de Rohan-Guéménée, d'Harcourt, de Brassac and de Galaar, under the direction of a nun irreverently styled by the schoolgirls *La Mère des Lumières*.

It was a splendid training in responsibility. Hélène acting " Esther " before a brilliant audience, and in a jewel-embroidered robe worth 100,000 écus, slips off quietly to change into her uniform that she may prepare the tisanes and the poultices for the infirmary. There was no question of playing at work, but of shouldering, at least in part, the burden that would later fall upon these girls when they were faced with the cares of a numerous household.

[1] Cf. Part II, Chap. III, which shows the importance given to domestic economy in the curriculum of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

There were nine "obediences," to use the correct name, and the girls spent a few months in each one so as to get the widest possible experience.

The abbess's apartments (*l'Abbatiale*) required duties very similar to those exacted of a lady-in-waiting. Service here, as at the Court, was honourable but very often tedious. Hélène has left us scant record of her own experience or of her impressions.

In the Sacristy were made the vestments and the altar linen; some of the nuns, we are told, worked like fairies and with the help of their pupils produced real art treasures. The girls who like Hélène were not gifted with their needle occupied themselves with the decorations or with the daily tidying and cleaning demanded by a large church served by four chaplains. There seems to have been plenty of time for gossiping as nuns and girls sat over their embroidery frames, and it is instructive to see how the very semblance of pettiness on the part of the religious fell distastefully even on the frivolous-minded girl and excited scorn.

When on duty at the lodge and parlours, the girls enjoyed ringing the complicated call-bells by which the nuns were summoned. "Eight strokes followed by five and then a peal" would call one to the parlour, and similar chimes were heard throughout the day, till the schoolgirl comments "c'était à n'en plus finir."

In the infirmary, the linen-room, the refectory, and the kitchen, the girls set themselves to tasks of the most humdrum nature, very far from the spirit of the "playway."[1]

[1] Professor F. Collard of the University of Louvain praised this practical training in a conference of the Federation of Catholic Women in Brussels on October 30th, 1930. With his speech, published under the title *Comment élever nos Jeunes Filles* it is interesting to compare that made at the opening of the Lycée Molière in October 1880. Here the account given by H. Massalska is taken to show

But if there was no definite idea of giving them opportunities for self-expression or for developing originality, nevertheless they would often find (perhaps with all the greater spontaneity) an outlet for their girlish fun and conversation. These high-spirited girls lived anything but a dull life within their convent walls. Their well-planned mischief, their quarrels and worries, even the home-troubles, weighty and full of grief, come down to us in the pages of the diary, revealing quite unconsciously the principles and ideals which governed this little world, and the many preoccupations that would possess the demure black-robed adolescents.

In the service of the community, a variety of talents might be displayed from running errands to taking part in a concert. Hélène's harp-playing to the accompaniment of Mlle. de Talleyrand's spinet, evidently won for her a certain popularity. In that "obedience" she learned to know more of the different members of the community. There were nuns working at paintings or embroideries. Some were occupied with their studies, as for instance, Madame de Romelin "toute hérissée de grec et de latin," whom the girls surnamed "Aristotle's Daughter." Others again were employed in the service of the library.

Three large apartments housed the 16,000 volumes collected through the passage of years at the Abbaye-aux-Bois. Hélène had scant respect for the chief librarian, but she shows by her remarks that good use was made of the magnificent collection of books. We get a glimpse into the work of cataloguing. Child as she was, Hélène was well aware of the controversial character of some of the volumes, and what was implied

the backwardness of convents. See Gréard's *Education et Instruction*, vol. i, p. 334.

by the presence, in the convent library, of certain Jansenistic works.

The convent theatre with its ample collection of costumes could hardly come under the category of a monastic "obedience," though we know that it laid a heavy tax upon the girls' free time, a tax which they paid willingly enough, however, even consecrating to it the hours of recreation. Witnessed by a brilliant gathering and discussed, probably, in court and princely home, the dramatic and choric performances took a most serious place in the thoughts and enthusiasm of the pupils.

Although Hélène tells us the hours of her classes, like a real schoolgirl she has but little to say of their contents. She draws a dreary picture of her first efforts to learn to write, showing how the power of thought and expression outran the development of mechanical proficiency in the mercurial little Pole. But if we cannot expect from her a detailed analysis of the curriculum, we derive evidence that her education was not lacking in cultural elements and in solid grounding. The teaching that could enable a child of ten to express herself so limpidly and so vivaciously could hardly be characterised as inefficient or sterile. Hélène's diary is enthralling, clear, balanced, consistent, alive. The little writer's personality looks out from its pages, wilful and worldly, but with all the intrinsic lovableness of childhood still clinging about her. She is wonderfully candid in her self-judgments, and enables us to see the character-training resulting from life with other girls and in the monastic environment. Spoiled and difficult to get on with when first she arrives, she learns by contact with others how to adapt herself to her surroundings. We see the influence her friends have upon her, and how she ponders on all events. She notices, for instance, how her companions

are characterised by a quiet dignity in speech and manner which marks them off from the other young people whom she meets outside the convent walls. She hears outsiders comment upon the originality of thought and expression, the grace and self-possession, the high tone (*le bon ton*) of her schoolfellows, and she puts these qualities down to the influence of the mistress-general, Madame de Rochechouart.[1]

This is a name that should, indeed, have been mentioned earlier in pages that purport to give an account of the Abbaye-aux-Bois; for Madame de Rochechouart was the life and soul of the monastery school, the guiding genius of the gifted schoolgirl, the mother to the motherless child. In and out of the pages of Hélène's diary, with its descriptions of the many-sided interests in her school life, its view upon many worlds, and its intellectual and social preoccupations, there peeps the ever baffling figure of the mistress-general who played so large a part in the child's development.

Madame de Rochechouart, sister of the Duke de Mortemart, was about twenty-seven years of age when Hélène entered the abbey. Tall, handsome, aloof, and dignified, she was, after the abbess, the most important person in the house, and appears to have had a free hand in all that regarded the school. Her entry into religion seems, like that of her two sisters, to have been dictated by family policy rather than by spiritual motives. The spiritual side is never stressed in Hélène's comments upon her teachers,

[1] "Les Femmes que *l'Histoire des Salons* nous présente comme les reines de la conversation et les maîtresses du savoir-vivre y ont excellé par un extrême esprit de divination . . . elles sont heureuses dans le choix des termes, qu'elles placent si juste, que tout connus qu'ils sont, ils ont le charme de la nouveauté, . , . et il n'appartient qu'à elles de faire lire dans un seul mot tout un sentiment, et de rendre délicatement une pensée qui est délicate" (Charmot, *Teste bien faicte*, p. 26).

but even allowing for that fact, we can trace no evidence of a supernatural outlook in the woman whose inherent nobility and surpassing educational gifts stand out clearly in every page. What Madame de Rochechouart might have been in a more fervent environment can be dimly guessed from the diarist's account.

Hélène notes with approval how her mistress-general refused to descend to the small gossip and petty preoccupations which other nuns allowed to enter into their intercourse with the girls.[1] Whereas in the " obediences " the convent news would be exchanged and freely commented upon, in Madame de Rochechouart's presence conversation always remained upon a lofty plane. For her, as for the noble girls who were her pupils, *avoir l'âme basse* was the unforgivable sin. She would not allow belittling and puerile punishments to be inflicted upon her children, and seems to have treated their confidences with a gravity and respect that won their gratitude. Never surprised by the pranks of these high-spirited schoolgirls, she remained imperturbable and mistress of the situation even in the face of a well-organised rebellion. When Hélène and her boon companions were found guilty of midnight raids and of so tying up the convent bell with their handkerchiefs that the household could not be called of a morning, the mistress-general found difficulty only in keeping serious when administering a suitable rebuke.

Her religion, her education, and the race from which she sprang gave her a penetration and an intelligent sympathy which made her all-powerful. Her gentleness and sure-

[1] Madame Guizot in *Lettres de Famille sur l'Education* has a terrible indictment of this side of schoolgirl life (vol. ii, pp. 3–4). It is to guard against such failures that the better convent schools laid stress on games, certain hours of silence, and other points which have often met with unfair criticism, such as the avoidance of too-exclusive friendships.

ness of touch were unfailing. We can see, in the diary, her opinion dominating the young writer, as every event is weighed in the balance of her approval or disapproval. She is in touch with all the personages who frequent the convent school. The brilliant marriages arranged for her children are first discussed with her. All things are brought to the bar of her judgment, and, for Hélène in particular there is no other criterion.

It is a provokingly elusive personality that escapes us in the last page of the diary. Madame de Rochchouart dies when Hélène is not yet fourteen, and her death, together with the election of her successor, is the last event that the child has the heart to record. From now onwards, Hélène will look forward to the end of her school life, and she tells us nothing of her last two years, although they must have been among the most fruitful in incident of all this vivid and interesting period. When at sixteen years of age, after many negotiations, Hélène Massalska is married in the abbey church to the Prince de Ligne, a touching and characteristic incident occurs. The monastery is crowded with distinguished guests; the bride has gone upstairs to lay aside her magnificent wedding dress. Her husband waits below, with the travelling coach; but Hélène delays. She has taken leave of her faithful women and of the rooms where she has spent six happy years—she has said farewell to her mistresses and to her companions. Alone, in a little side chapel, kneeling on the marble slab above Madame de Rochechouart's tomb, the young bride is taking a deeper and a more intimate farewell of all that she most loved and cherished in childhood.

When Hélène Massalska will return to Paris, the Abbaye-aux-Bois will be deserted, like all the other great schools of France. A strange and unrecognisable town will greet her

eyes. The streets and shops will bear new names. New manners and new customs will revolutionise social life. The past will seem a very dream. But the traditional elements that underlay her education will not die for ever. Recaptured and brought to life again under new circumstances, the studies, the games, the household duties of the Abbaye-aux-Bois will make up the tissue of life in other French schools in which will also live the spirit of Hélène's mistress-general. " La Maîtresse-Générale doit être l'âme du pensionnat " Madame Barat will write in her constitutions.[1] Did she know anything about Madame de Rochechouart ? She inherited, at all events, the great tradition of her predecessors, and she knew how to bring up children upon vital principles.

[1] Chapter V.

Chapter V

IN AN URSULINE CONVENT

"The last thing which I have to say to you . . . is to be always in the most perfect harmony, forming one heart and one soul. Display all you are in drawing always more closely the bonds of charity. Love one another with a reciprocal love and bear with each other for the love of Christ, Who will live in you if you live in Him and for Him."[1]

It may seem an anachronism to place this chapter after one describing school life on the eve of the French Revolution, for the Ursuline Convent in the Rue St. Jacques was founded more than a hundred years before Hélène Massalska went to the Abbaye-aux-Bois. However, the monastery of the Rue de Sève was also one whose roots struck deep into the past. It is only in order to utilise the vivacious diary that has come down to us that we have chosen so late a period in the history of monastic schools. Girls had been educated under more or less similar conditions, though with less pomp and worldliness, ever since the leisurely days of St. Hilda and St. Gertrude. But not all schoolgirls write diaries.

The Teaching Order, as such, is a more recent development, and foremost among teaching nuns the Ursulines take their stand. Founded in North Italy about the middle of the sixteenth century by St. Angela Merici, and introduced into Paris by Madame Acarie, the Ursulines opened a school that was soon recognised as one of the leading educational establishments in the country.[2] Already by the beginning of the eighteenth century there were several hundred

[1] From the Counsels of St. Angela Merici.

[2] When St. Peter Fourier founded his congregation of Notre Dame, a teaching order to which belonged in the last century the famous Parisian school of *Les Oiseaux*, he sent some nuns to Paris to learn from the Ursulines of the Rue St. Jacques the method of conducting a school (R. Bazin, *Un Monastère de Saint-Pierre Fourier*, pp. 75–6).

Ursuline monasteries in France,[1] monasteries which were indeed to be swept away by the Revolution, but not before they had given proof, in the spirit of their martyred nuns, of a vigorous life that was to know a speedy resurrection. We shall see how many of the scattered inmates gathered together again in order to reopen their schools and to hand on intact the tradition which was theirs by right of inheritance.

The Ursulines[2] were first introduced into France when the *Sisters of Christian Doctrine* of *L'Isle-sur-Sorgues*, near Avignon, adopted in 1596 the Constitutions of the Ursulines of Milan, that is, the Rule written by St. Angela Merici, adapted and modified by St. Charles Borromeo. Soon a number of monasteries with solemn vows and Papal enclosure were founded all over France, the most important being Paris (1612), Toulouse (1615), Bordeaux (1618), Lyons (1619), Dijon (1619), Tulle (1621), Arles (1624), Avignon (1637).[3] Each of these monasteries drew up its own constitutions. These, while differing in many unessential points, had a common likeness born of the spirit of St. Angela[4] which, together with the Rule of St. Augustine, formed the basis of Ursuline life. When new houses were founded from these first monasteries, they adopted the constitutions of their Mother House, and thus it was that those of Bordeaux and Paris, the two most flourishing congregations, became well known. The *Rêglemens des Ursulines*,[5] published in Paris in 1673, by Gilles

[1] *Annales*, vol. i, p. 44.

[2] Details very kindly furnished from the archives of the Mother House of the Roman Union of Ursulines, Via Nomentana, Rome, 1932.

[3] Ibid.

[4] The Rêglemens, Testament, and Counsels of St. Angela Merici were sources of inspiration to all Ursuline monasteries. (The two last may be read in the *Spirit of St. Angela*, published in 1907 by the Ursulines of Brown County, Ohio, U.S.A.)

[5] The *Rêglemens* were reprinted in the shop of Louis Josse, in 1705, and again by Thibaut-Landriot in 1845. In both these editions, the letter of the Vicar-

Blaisot, at the Hôtel de Bavière near the Porte St. Marcel, in Paris, gives a living picture of the school at the Rue St. Jacques, and has been freely used in this chapter. Other sources of information are: the Constitutions of the Parisian Congregation, the *Annual Letters*, or annals, of several Ursuline monasteries, and the many biographies of Ursuline nuns. Early records centre exclusively around the life of the religious, later ones include accounts of external events and historical facts, but they never strike the pedagogic note. There is something significant in this abstention which goes to prove that if the Order was *organised* for teaching purposes, these did not hold the first place in the minds and thoughts of its members.

The ideals and methods of an Ursuline school, while having necessarily many points of contact with those of the Benedictines, offered also marked contrasts. Whereas the Abbaye-aux-Bois stood for leisurely culture and the easy-going trust in the efficacy of its traditions, which is characteristic of every institution that has stood the test of time, the Ursulines give proof of intensity of effort, efficiency of organisation, and a real advance towards scientific pedagogy. The solemn ritual and display of the Benedictine Abbey, with its distinguished and aristocratic tone, is replaced in the more modern institution by dignified simplicity. Moreover, Benedictine schools were a side issue, however important a one, of the great houses which enshrined them. They could be suppressed without detriment to the religious life of which they formed part. But the very *raison d'être* of the Ursuline convent was the school. To its welfare the nuns were dedicated by a fourth vow made in addition to those promises of poverty, chastity, and obedi-

General, approving the *Règlemens* in 1652, shows that they had been drawn up from the middle of the seventeenth century.

ence by which their religious life was consecrated, a fourth vow which bound them, according to the dictates of obedience, to dedicate their energies to the education of youth.[1]

This did not mean that their whole life was to be rounded by a classroom. Their constitutions, which set before them high paths of prayer and union with God, make this fact sufficiently clear. But the external circumstances were to be planned round their school-life, and were to be systematised with a skill and a good sense that must have advanced the development of girls' education in France.

The Constitutions[2] show us that the different houses of the Order were largely independent of one another. They describe the internal administration of the community, the duties of its Superiors, its legislative assemblies, the different offices of the household, foremost among which may be counted that of the mistress-general. The pupils, who appear to have been admitted on more democratic principles than usually prevailed at the time (as would appear from some words of Madame de Maintenon at St. Cyr), were divided into large classes, somewhat after the

[1] This fourth vow, made also by the Ladies of St. Cyr and later by the Religious of the Sacred Heart, has sometimes been interpreted as a *vow to teach*. Thus, Dr. H. Barnard in *Madame de Maintenon and Saint-Cyr*, p. 45, comments on the unfitness for such work of some of the religious. To the nun it is made clear that the vow is fulfilled by any species of help given in the work of the school according to individual talents, and still more according to the orders of Superiors. Moreover, this vow does not put *teaching* as the primary object of life, as the same writer suggests (p. 199). The nun's first aim must always be the fulfilment of her religious duties and the perfection of her life with God.

[2] The French Ursuline nuns must not be confused with *Les Ursules* of Dôle, a congregation founded a few years previously by Anne de Xainctonge, chiefly for the education of the poor. The Rule of the *Ursules* is based upon that of St. Ignatius, and the nuns are not cloistered. Their history is of special interest on account of the remarkable character of their foundress and the almost unparalleled difficulties which she had to surmount. This congregation had a secondary school at Oxford, and is now settled at Versailles.

manner of the Abbaye-aux-Bois, and were handed over to the care of two class-mistresses, the one in authority, the other subordinate. These mistresses were entirely responsible for the order, discipline, physical well-being, religious instruction, and spiritual education of the children. They kept them together in the refectory, in the playground, and in the dormitory, and supervised the lessons given by specialists in the many branches of the curriculum. These specialists might be outside masters, but were very often the nuns themselves, for the Order had a high ideal of training. A passage from the biography of Mère St. Paul de Pomeron, who died in 1699 as a nun in the Rue St. Jacques, where she had been brought up from childhood, speaks of her as follows: "Mère St. Paul understood Latin, had a deep knowledge of the Old Testament and of the New, and was well versed in history and geography, and in those other branches of education befitting the vocation of an Ursuline who aims at personal sanctification as well as at being helpful to her neighbour. She was particularly gifted for all manual work, and we owe her some of the most beautiful vestments in our Sacristy. She was the author of a summary of Christian Doctrine that won the admiration of various Doctors of the Sorbonne, and in her youth she composed many delightful poems. She was as much esteemed by others as she seemed of little account in her own eyes." This is surely not the picture of a "narrow and illiterate education"! History has kept the memory of many such accomplished women who were once the pupils of the Ursulines, one of the most famous in the seventeenth century being Madame de Maintenon.[1]

[1] There are many interesting biographies given in *Les Ursulines de Blois ou Deux Cent Trente Ans d'un Monastère*, by l'Abbé Richaudeau, who has based his work on the annals of the house. For instance, Mère Menjot, who died on February 29th, 1720, had been at a Benedictine school, and was apparently a woman of learning

Reading, writing, arithmetic, needlework, geography, history, French, Latin, and music formed the stable subjects of the curriculum. From the *Rêglemens* it would appear that the nuns were ready to undertake any subject provided they had a competent mistress. The suggestions for the various branches given in the handbook are vigorous, sensible, and based on sound principles. They apparently were meant to guide and not to fetter the young teacher, who is warned not to consider them of obligation.

Surprisingly enough, we find minute instructions on the subject of teaching writing, instructions which lead us to conclude that the nuns had actually invaded the territory of the "Writing Masters," and were themselves instructing their pupils how to hold their pens gracefully; to write first o's and i's, then other letters according to a systematically graded course. More modern sounds the warning to let the lessons for the youngest children be short and frequent, never to allow scribbling or waste of paper and ink.[1] There is much insistence on the formation of good habits and on establishing from the first a high standard of order and neatness.

Punctuality is one of the first duties impressed upon the needlework mistress, perhaps because experience had shown how hard it is to collect together at the right moment all the requisites for craft work. A French seam is first to be taught, then a hem, then marking both on canvas and on cloth, and tapestry of growing complexity. Embroidery in white, gold, and in coloured silks is to be followed by other kinds of fancy work, but all must be in good taste and

and of character, a Latin scholar, as were many other nuns mentioned in the book. The author, writing in 1859, laments the inferiority of the girls of the nineteenth century to those of the seventeenth, and points out the maturity of judgment and the decision of character shown by the subjects of his sketches. Vol. ii, p. 4, et seq.

[1] *Rêglemens*, Part I, Chap. VI.

undertaken in a serious spirit which precludes waste of time and of materials. In reading these suggestions we are reminded of the Ursuline chapel at Amiens (a convent founded in 1616), made famous by the embroideries and tapestries designed and executed by the nuns.

The directions for those who give elementary instruction in the three R's are based upon the very important principle that the process of learning is *in itself* of interest to the child. The Montessorians would be in agreement with the Ursuline preoccupation to *grade* difficulties, but not to smooth them over. No attempt is made to envelop in some artificial enjoyment the mechanical effort necessary for the elementary work but, by individual teaching and carefully supervised practice, the child is to learn and to take pleasure in learning. "Do not help the children," says the *Règlemens*, "let them find things out for themselves." Thus by easy stages, from spelling books and prepared dictionaries, the children progress towards correct orthography: from games with counters they learn to add, subtract, and keep accounts.[1]

When the Ursuline schools were first established, the nuns appear to have taught the children to read and write in Latin before making them study French, but either the influence of Port Royal or, more likely, their own experience, made them see the advantage of giving most importance to the mother-tongue. The nuns did not have to go far afield to seek either new methods or new textbooks for language study, as it was already the matter of a well-established tradition. Memorising and carefully graded oral

[1] *Le Calcul au Jet* was a regular object-lesson, the nuns having had coins made to represent both French and foreign money. The children played shops with these in a manner that would please the modern Froebel teachers. The original use of the *Jetons* approximated more to the Montessori methods and was devised to teach place-value. See *Madame de Sainte-Beuve et les Ursulines de Paris*, p. 384.

work, "la répétition des leçons," "la lecture expliquée," and "la répétition de semaine," became part of the routine of the little girls educated by the Ursuline nuns, as much as they were part of the lives of their brothers in the schools of the University.

The order of day was as follows:

6 or 6.30.	Rise. Prayers, Holy Mass. Breakfast.
8 to 10.	Class.
10.15.	Litany.
10.30.	Dinner (during which a book was read aloud).
11.	Recreation.
12.15 to 2.	Class.
2.15.	Prayer.
2.45.	Goûter.
3 to 4.15.	Class. Catechism lesson.
6.30.	Supper. Recreation. Night prayers.
8.25.	Retire to rest.

The utter devotedness of the nuns to their children comes out in every page of the constitutions. Their self-sacrifice is to lie not in fasts and disciplines, but in the wholehearted dedication of their lives. They are to replace one another in the care of the children, watching over them with affectionate solicitude from early morning until night. In recreation hours, they must be gay and even-tempered, without descending to easy familiarity and trivial conversation. "Habituate them to speak but rarely," their foundress had written, "for it is difficult to speak much without being exposed to the danger of committing many faults." "Endeavour to converse of edifying subjects, and to let due mildness and modesty be blended in your conversation." "Advise the sisters to exclude any topic

likely to lead to a spirit of worldliness or independence. Let them finally remember that, on entering the congregation, they have renounced the hopes of the world and their own will."[1]

It was a high ideal, animated by a spirit of prayer and safeguarded by the careful organisation of the household, an organisation which helped to foster the union and close co-operation between the nuns, as they worked in harmony under the direction of the mistress-general. This last was a great personage, and occupied much the same position in relation to nuns and children as did Madame de Rochechouart at the abbey. Madame de Maintenon was in the habit of telling her pupils at St. Cyr, how, as a schoolgirl at the Rue St. Jacques, she trembled when the mistress-general visited the class. These visits, which the *Réglemens* directs should be made every two months, were the occasion for distributing rewards and administering punishments, after an investigation of the progress of the pupils. Once a year the mistress-general read the school rule to the assembled pupils, explaining the nature and spirit of the various obligations and the reasons for the sanction imposed on those who neglected them.

Punishments were light, but often of a humiliating character that made them terrible to little girls. "I dreaded it more than many people do hanging,"[2] wrote Lady Jerningham of similar penances inflicted at Panthémont in the middle of the eighteenth century. The example of the religious, their vigilant care, and the tone of the house were in themselves the chief discipline that trained the character of the children. A solid grounding

[1] Counsels of St. Angela Merici.

[2] *The Jerningham Letters*, vol. i, p. 29. Lady Jerningham (Frances Dillon) was also at school with the Blue Nuns, Rue de Charenton, Faubourg St. Antoine, a place famous in England whence girls of the best families were sent.

in religion was to form the basis of this training, and the class-mistresses were expected to prepare these lessons with especial care. Lists of books were recommended for their private study. They were advised to write out their notes. Lessons in the lower classes at least were to be short, and the mistresses were to make sure of going over the same ground again and again in order to lay firm foundations. The influence of the Jesuits may perhaps be noticed here, for the Ursulines were in close touch with the Company of Jesus and learned much from the methods of these masters.[1]

In addition to the example and the instruction of the nuns, the children were influenced by the ritual of the great feast days of the Church, when they attended Divine Office and saw the ceremonial carried out with due reverence and solemnity. Something of this religious atmosphere was made to pass into their lives, their manners, speech, and tone of voice. Thus the silence and self-control demanded of them, their curtsies to Superiors, their gentleness and self-respect in dress and carriage expressed a definite and high ideal of womanhood, part of the tradition which moulded their lives.

Although a certain amount of domestic training has always been considered essential to the education of French girls, it does not appear that the children in Ursuline convents took such an active part in the work of the house as did the pupils of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. One reason may be found in the more exacting character of their studies, another in the marked separation between the community and the school. The girls did not penetrate into the nuns' quarters, nor did they hold conversation with any of the religious who did not happen to be in charge of

[1] This fact can be gathered from the annals of the houses.

them at the moment. Madame de Maintenon used to tell the nuns of St. Cyr how potent an influence came from this very aloofness, and how strongly supernatural was the intercourse between the Ursulines and their pupils.

There resulted also a possibility, of which the nuns seem to have been quite aware, of the boarders getting somewhat out of touch with real life. This fact is brought home to us with special force when we read the strict rules concerning the parlour, and learn how few were the periodical outings and that the holidays were of three weeks once a year. In order to meet this danger the mistresses are given homely directions as to how they may foster in their girls a practical spirit so necessary in after days. They must take them to the linen room to see after their own clothes, they must teach them to keep their own accounts. Honourable charges (domestic work of a light kind) could be imposed upon the most trustworthy, and the day-boarders even had a prefect-system, by which one girl in every ten was made responsible for discipline and order.[1]

The danger of narrowness could, however, never be ignored in convent life. Too much concentration upon essentials, too perfect an organisation, too much sacrifice of the individual to the general good, could and in many cases surely *did* result. If the spirit of the abbey could lead to *préciosité* and display, the well-regulated convent could over-stimulate the logical French mind to an exactness of detail that killed the inner spirit. "Corruptio optimi pessima." However this may be, there is much of historical evidence to prove that in most Ursuline convents far-reaching activities engendered within the convent walls gave width of outlook and solid interests to the pupils. The many enterprises of the nuns go to prove how well

[1] These prefects were called *Dixainières* (*Règlemens*, Part II, Chap. V).

their mode of life met the social needs of the day. At Auch, they published textbooks, a French history, a history of literature, a history of the Church, and an anthology of verse. At Nice they set on foot an association for working mothers. At Toulouse they organised a group of charitable ladies to visit hospitals and prisons, to instruct servants, or indeed to undertake any social work. Houses of refuge, normal schools, night schools, and orphanages were opened in various towns; elementary schools were, wherever possible, attached to the convents, and the children of the boarding schools were encouraged, according to the spirit of the age, each to adopt a *protégée* and to care for her welfare. There were literary circles in the school, with contests and compositions, while the feast days of the Church brought ever varied ceremonial. It is, for instance, to the Ursulines of the Rue St. Jacques that may be attributed the widespread French custom of the "Cérémonie de Première Communion."[1] The white dress and veil, the presents, the assembly of relations and friends surrounded this day in the life of a child with a glow of happiness and reverent appreciation that made it stand out as one of the happiest. And other feast days also brought in their train, as one writer has described: "General recreations, beautiful and joyous ceremonial with rich music and gorgeous decorations, and sometimes, even honoured guests trailing their silks through the awakened corridors, courts and gardens, in laughter and jest, the table loaded with festal goodies and the thousand amusing and clever diversions in which the French people are gifted with peculiar genius. Tired and happy, their youth renewed like the eagle's, the entire household sank at last to slumber, the youth of years and the youth of simple life, side by side,

[1] Postel, *Histoire de Ste. Angèle de Merici et de tout l'Ordre des Ursulines.*

relaxed and rested, ready to resume on the morrow the earnest labour of regular life." [1]

The Revolution swept away the Ursuline schools like all others, and left the nuns to take refuge with their families or to hide in twos and threes in miserable lodgings, eking out an existence as best they could, and striving as far as in them lay to stem the tide of evil all around them. In company with other courageous women, they visited the prisons at the risk of their lives, ministered to priests, to the sick, the aged and the dying, and strove to supply the want of schools by gathering around them, here and there, small groups of destitute children. The historian Taine describes "cinq ou six fillettes autour d'une Ursuline déguisée, épelant l'alphabet dans une arrière-chambre," a picture which gives faithfully enough the typical background of their efforts at this time. Yet even in 1795 we hear of over a hundred children being taught by Mother St. Anne Turpin, at St. Quentin in Brittany. This information was left on record by a priest, one of her pupils, to whom she gave enough instruction to enable him to follow the classes of his seminary; a fact which proves that the education of this improvised school was evidently not confined to the bare elements.

As the storm subsided, the work of reconstruction was undertaken and soon a hundred convents were reopened. By 1827 the Order was officially re-established. Already in 1808, Monseigneur Rousseau, Bishop of Orléans, was able to congratulate the nuns at Beaugency on the way they managed to combine their primitive spirit with a sympathetic understanding of new intellectual needs.

[1] From *St. Angela Merici and Her Teaching Idea*, pp. 376–7. Cf. the account of a *récréation extraordinaire* at St. Cyr in Madame de Maintenon's *Lettres historiques et édifiantes*, vol. i, p. 447, and vol. ii, p. 401.

Forty years after receiving this praise from the Bishop, the same convent was awarded a gold medal for efficiency in studies by the *Ministre de l'Instruction publique.*

The task of reconstruction was full of difficulties. The nuns had no textbooks and had to write them. The tremendous social changes had to be met by women who were for the most part advanced in years, and whose active work had all been done under totally different conditions. The education of the young novices who entered, imbued with a new spirit and with an outlook upon life very different from that of their superiors, must have been a delicate matter for women who had suffered so much in the cause of loyalty to the past. It speaks volumes for the strength of their tradition, for the loftiness of their motives, and for the supernatural character of their Order, that in so many cases it was able to stand the strain. Numbers of Ursuline convents were reopened. New foundations were made in France and even in America, but the Order lacked one special quality of which the changed times more and more brought out the need : there was a lack of unity, and consequently of strength, for each house was virtually independent. For many years this handicap was felt.

Nearly a century afterwards the lack was to be supplied by the " Roman Union " which, by joining many branches into one, has welded the Ursuline Congregation together, without taking from it its original spirit.[1] The Ursuline Order has achieved that union always desired by the foundress and by the members, but not needed, at least in

[1] To-day, the " Roman Union " has drawn up constitutions based upon all the more essential points common to the older monasteries, but with the additions necessitated by a central government. Houses which do not belong to this Union still keep the Constitutions of Paris or Bordeaux or, more rarely, those of Toulouse, Lyons, or Dijon. (Details supplied in 1932 by the Mother House of the " Roman Union," Via Nomentana, Rome.)

the same outward organisation, in the seventeenth and eighteenth century as it is to-day.

It was the unity and closely interwoven hierarchy, the central government and well-established constitution given by St. Madeleine Sophie Barat, and so many of the foundresses who came after her, to their Orders, which made possible a great work for education in the last century. Already two hundred years before, Mary Ward,[1] an Englishwoman, foundress of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, fully realised the importance of central government. It was thus in complete harmony with the Catholic spirit that St. Madeleine Sophie should have set much store on union and close co-operation and should have given to her congregation the motto: "Cor unum et anima una in Corde Jesu."

[1] See *Life of Mary Ward*, 1585 *to* 1645, by M. C. E. Chambers.

Chapter VI

SAINT CYR

"You must hold fast the piety, the modesty, the gentleness, the docility, the regulated life, the fear and love of God, the fidelity to duty, that Saint Cyr has given you; and to all these virtues you must add a noble, free, unembarrassed, suitable, peaceful, consistent behaviour which offends no one and pleases everybody."[1]

THIS chapter will take us into the midst of the brown uniforms and the red, green, yellow, and blue ribbons of the girls of St. Cyr.

"La Maison de St. Louis," founded at St. Cyr, near Versailles, by Louis XIV for poor girls of good family, was the outcome of Madame de Maintenon's interest in education, particularly in that of girls who like herself were destined to enter upon life handicapped by financial difficulties. Having in 1682 taken under her protection a small establishment founded by an Ursuline nun, whom circumstances had led to leave her convent, she soon saw the possibility for good in such a work and secured for it the patronage of the King. Little by little, St. Cyr, a school for the daughters of impoverished noblemen, became the darling conception of this woman of genius, and attained to a height of perfection which has made it live in the minds of Frenchmen as the model school for girls. It is true that it passed through a period of regrettable worldliness and fell a prey to the love of show which the successful rendering of Racine's "Esther" and "Athalie" did much to foster. But after a somewhat over-severe reaction, the piety, common sense, and good taste of the foundress reasserting itself, St. Cyr was able to regain its balance and to develop upon soundly educational lines.[2]

[1] *Entretiens*, Madame de Maintenon.

[2] It must not be forgotten, however, that it owed much to the prevailing tradition and to other convents—the Ursulines, of course, were the prototypes. Nuns

Indeed, it is part of the fascination of those many volumes of conversations, counsels, letters, and other records which enshrine the history of St. Cyr, to trace the development of the foundress's ideas, and to follow her experiments, her failures, and her successes. Only an age of well-developed educational theory would have engendered the frank discussions, the well-balanced judgments, the earnest thought and care lavished by these women upon their work. Their aim was to produce Christian wives and mothers, women of distinguished manners and wide mental culture, whose piety would be enlightened enough to stand the assaults of rationalism and whose many interests would occupy them in whatever sphere of life they might be placed. Great stress was laid upon the training of character, upon the formation of desirable habits, and the cultivation of good manners. Reasonableness, the sweet reasonableness which so specially characterised Madame de Maintenon, appears to have been the underlying principle of the system, and her most distinctive contribution to the education of French girls.

There were four classes at St. Cyr: the red class (aged seven to ten years), the green (ten to fourteen), the yellow (fourteen to sixteen), and the blue (sixteen to twenty).[1] The curriculum embraced reading, writing, arithmetic, history (sacred and profane), geography, French language, orthography, French literature (with mythology), music, drawing, dancing, needlework (that is, plain sewing, embroidery, tapestry, and lace-making). The study of

from the Convent of the Child Jesus in the Rue St. Maur were asked to help in the days of the foundation, both to train the Dames de St. Louis and to take the classes. Later the Community called in the help of the Visitandines at Chaillot. In all cases they showed themselves grateful for the teaching they had received from these religious and they seemed anxious to profit by their help.

[1] *Mémoires des Dames*, p. 139.

religion was to form the basis of all other instruction. The older girls were given lessons in *La Morale*, that is to say, in the elementary principles of moral philosophy which formed an integral part in the education of their brothers, and which must enter into every serious study of religion or social science.

On the whole, the programme was less academic than that of the Rue St. Jacques where Madame de Maintenon had spent the years of her childhood. Indeed, the older girls gave time to household duties somewhat after the manner of the children of the Abbaye-aux-Bois. This was all the more necessary on account of the motherless condition of many of the girls, who probably would never receive at home that elementary domestic training which nothing can replace. Moreover, as the pupils were especially recruited from impoverished families, they would one day have to try, in face of difficulties, to keep up a distinguished position. For this, all the skill and practical wisdom taught at St. Cyr would be found necessary, so that in grounding its pupils in domestic studies the establishment was in very truth giving them the most fitting preparation for life.

" How I wish," sighed Madame de Maintenon to the mistresses at St. Cyr, " that you would perfect your tapestry work, not in order to produce exquisite patterns, but to furnish suitably designed chairs and sofas! "

For Madame de Maintenon, the children were everything. Delightful as was her intercourse with the nuns, she seems to have made no secret of the fact that she looks upon them as means to an end. When first gathered together, the Dames de St. Louis were merely devout ladies united by a noble purpose. But, as the foundress quaintly points out : " On n'a point trouvé de moyen plus

propre pour vous fixer que de vous faire faire des vœux solennels."[1] She continues: "I am persuaded that no perfection is too lofty for the ladies of St. Cyr. They ought to be saints, but their sanctity consists in the perfect accomplishment of their religious duties,[2] and in the care of their children." This utilitarian spirit and absence of spiritual vision contrasts markedly with the insight and ideals of interior life that fill the pages of the Ursulines' constitutions. Madame de Maintenon, however, was not a religious, and never realised the price at which these are made.

She was, notwithstanding, a born genius in all matters educational, and her talents scintillate in the records of St. Cyr. The community respected deeply this woman of equivocal position, and seem to have given her a singular place in their life. To many of the nuns she was guide, philosopher, and friend, and to some almost a mother, so intimate was their intercourse. She would stay for days together in the house, presiding at the nuns' recreation, visiting the classes, talking, talking to teachers and pupils with that over-confidence in the power of logic and of the spoken word which was her weakness. Not for nothing did Louis XIV surname *La Raison* this high-principled, consistent woman, who, at least sometimes, seemed to take too easily for granted that others, like herself, could be counted upon to act rightly, if only duty were made plain to them.

Solid piety, a strong practical spirit, a serious outlook upon life, and *la distinction* seem to have been the outstand-

[1] *Lettres et Entretiens*, vol. ii, p. 385.

[2] It seems very difficult to reconcile to this saying, and indeed to the whole trend of Madame de Maintenon's writings, the claim of St. Marc Girardin, who would see in St. Cyr a bold effort to secularise the education of girls (*Etude sur J. J. Rousseau*, vol. ii, ch. 12).

ing characteristics of the girls at St. Cyr. Very charming glimpses are given us into their schooldays. Perhaps Mlle. d'Aumale, a favourite of Madame de Maintenon, who often took her as a companion, may be selected as an example of the type of personality produced. " She is most intelligent on all points! " the foundress wrote of the girl, " and she is gifted, both intellectually and artistically. I have made her learn cooking, and now she is as successful with a dish of rice as at playing the piano." [1]

A vivacious, many-sided young person, Mlle. d'Aumale reveals herself in the spontaneity of her letters. From the country where she is staying with Madame, she writes to her class-mistress: " Yes, Mother, I do play the piano, but I am learning nothing new, because my Master is dangerously ill. . . . I have a great amount of music, but not much heart for the work when I am alone. I not only have geographical maps and the large globe, but also a big atlas. As to *your* map, I had the best intentions in the world of bringing it back to you, but my many concerns made me forget it, and I put it away in my cupboard. . . ." (It is refreshing to see that even this accomplished person could behave as a schoolgirl of to-day!) Again, when planning to stay with her benefactress, Mlle. d'Aumale writes to her playfully: " As to domestic arrangements, Cholet could do your cooking very well. If he does not know how to manage the soup I will teach him." And writing back to St. Cyr: " I am getting accustomed to the fatigues of rural life and trying to get strong. . . . My life is not idle. I seem to be all day long singing, working at my embroidery, laughing and giving my time to the farmyard. . . . One of our cows is ill . . . and a duckling has been run over. . . ."

[1] *Lettres et Entretiens*, vol. ii, p. 119.

They are charming letters, fresh, amusing, and full of life; nor is the serious note wanting. Indeed, the high level of conversation at St. Cyr, as revealed to us in the *Entretiens*, shows that literary and historical problems were by no means foreign to the pupils. Madame has had to ask at times that the girls may be restrained in their literary efforts [1] as well as in their dramatic activities. They were at one moment, apparently, as enthusiastic about writing *Des Proverbes* and *Des Conversations* after the manner of the time, as about acting "Esther" or "Athalie" before the Court. Nevertheless, we do not find the intellectual side of education much stressed *in theory*. Madame advocates solid spiritual reading: St. Paul, Rodriguez, St. Francis of Sales, Thomas à-Kempis; but to one at least among the nuns she laments the avidity with which women run after books: "How much better to confine oneself to five or six well-known volumes. Reading does more harm to our curious and light-minded sex than is always realised." We must remember that this was the age of Molière and Fénelon, and that a strong reaction was setting all minds against the learned woman.

If her girls were not to learn much from books, however, they were to be formed and educated by the conversation of cultured people. *La conversation intéressante et polie*, which is still a subject *taught* (with much advantage) to French children, was among the most important elements of life at St. Cyr.

Those conversations fill volumes, and even to-day they have a fascination. Let us take a topic at random, *the art of reflecting*. "To reflect is to think continuously and with attention upon any subject." How little we weigh and ponder over what we see and hear! How mentally lazy

[1] *Lettres et Entretiens*, vol. i, p. 108.

the children are over their parlour games (*jeux d'esprit*). Then follow anecdotes of the thoughtful and the thoughtless in court and camp and in every walk of life, stories about Madame's childhood, when the only topic of conversation she and her eight-year-old brother were allowed was that of *Plutarch's Lives*. "And we managed to enjoy our talks."

Another day the conversation turned upon *discretion*. How many ways there are of being tactless! It is tactless to choose the most comfortable position in the room or to help oneself to the best at table. One must not interrupt a person speaking, nor look bored, nor talk of oneself. It is tactless to speak of a defect, physical or moral, before a person who obviously possesses it; or to show that one has already heard the piece of news that is being eagerly imparted. It is tactless to get in the light of a person working, to ask unnecessary questions, or to answer those which are not addressed to us. Tactless also is it to speak dogmatically or to ask a lady her age! One feels that this conversation must have made good entertainment, especially if, as appears to have been the case, all might freely speak their mind.

What should a well-bred woman know? [1] "A little of everything, for we never can tell what life may bring. Those people who can do nothing are a terrible burden on society. Ask them to draw up an account, and they will say that they have never learned arithmetic. Seek their help eagerly in some press of work, and they will tell you

[1] There is a touch of dramatic irony in a remark made in a letter to the Abbess of Gomerfontaine, which shows that in social outlook Madame de Maintenon was not so much ahead of her time as she was in matters educational: "The instruction of a *demoiselle* should be more extended than that of a vine dresser's daughter." The writer of this book looks to a vine dresser's daughter as the foundress of her Order. (See *Lettres et Entretiens*, vol. ii, p. 352.)

that they cannot hold a needle. It is embarrassing for them as well as for those who have asked for their services. Nobody wants such women, they are a burden to their husbands, and an object of contempt to their servants. They inspire confidence in no one, and on the contrary are always calling upon others to help them in so trivial a matter as buying a pair of gloves." A most telling indictment of over-specialisation in education!

For mental culture, memory work is advocated: "Fill your minds with beautiful and helpful thoughts, with whole chapters from *L'Introduction à la Vie Dévote*, with poetry and with dialogues!" St. Madeleine Sophie, who imposed such learning upon her novices, reiterated this precept again and again. Artistic matters would come up sometimes: "Those artificial bouquets you place upon your altars! Nothing could be dirtier . . . when you have flowers in the garden, arrange them quite simply in vases . . . when you have none, then go without decorations. . . ."

Here and there come precise directions about manners, how to thank an equal, a *laquais*. The latter must be called *Monsieur* out of politeness to his master, and his services should be recognised by a bow, but without rising. If snuff is presented by a lady of high position it must be accepted, it can be dropped imperceptibly afterwards! More serious subjects often occupied the young philosophers. What was true liberty? True happiness? What did life offer that was truly desirable? Then basing their arguments on moral and religious principles they would ransack history for examples and illustrations. How they must have hung upon the lips of the great Court lady, the cynosure of all eyes in their country, as she would bring to bear upon the discussion her wide experience of life! How eagerly they must have awaited those anecdotes that

came so spicily from one who knew the greatest men and women of the day!

Madame de Maintenon was too good an educator not to realise that seclusion within convent walls might easily make a schoolgirl view the world in a too roseate light. Practical good sense pervaded all her conversation and made her for ever try to bring her girls face to face with the realities of life. Their fair dreams of an enchanting existence to be entered upon when once they had left school were ever being dispelled by Madame's quiet realism and her insistence on the facts of life.

There were talks also with the nuns, either at recreation hours or on those days specially set apart for needlework and conversation, when, grouped around their foundress, they discussed with her their common aims. A tone of disinterestedness and lofty self-dedication characterise these talks in which were unfolded the ideals of St. Cyr. All success depended upon the personal worth of the teachers; they must, then, strive to sacrifice themselves wholly to their ideal, to fit themselves each day more perfectly for the work taken up from a high motive, and carried out in harmony one with another.[1]

Their several positions in the house had to be regulated. The mistress-general was to guide and animate the school, but she must not interfere unduly with the class-mistresses. Their private concerns are outside her sphere of authority and must be left to themselves and their superiors. The mistresses must be loyal to one another, never allowing themselves criticisms; for instance, they are warned not to say that the last class-mistress taught the children nothing!

Sound pedagogical ideas are constantly thrown out.

[1] Thus, as Dr. Barnard points out, St. Cyr was both a school and a training college. See Part II, Chap. V, "The Training of the Educator."

Questioning and the answering of questions is an art and needs study. It would be well to let the children see that we do not always know the answer to what they ask.[1] On the other hand, we should turn aside thoughtless and too frequent questions. Childish and silly games should not be allowed; for instance, the *reds* are too big to play with dolls.[2] Work must be carefully graded, and care must be taken not to overload the memory. In 1701, comment is made on a lesson given by Madame de Givel. In her explanations of a passage of the Gospel she had presented too much matter—she did all the talking herself, using words which the children did not understand and failing to draw out their initiative. Again and again there is complaint made that the mistresses think more of show than of solid teaching. They go over the children's work instead of leaving them to make their own corrections. The need of repetition is also frequently stressed.

Sometimes the discussion turns upon planning the day's occupations. The *blues* spend many hours dispersed about the house, seeing after their domestic duties; but the *yellows* lead too sedentary a life.[3] Sometimes we hear that the studies are going down because of the exaggerated importance attached to singing: "We have grown too hard to please in the matter of singing in this house," she says. Nevertheless, she enquires with interest how the girls like plain chant, and is pleased to hear that they are fond of it.

There is a very maternal tone in all that touches child management. Madame believes in the little rewards and

[1] *Lettres et Entretiens*, vol. i, p. 276.

[2] Ibid., vol. i, pp. 252–3.

[3] Madame encouraged outdoor games, running, jumping, and dancing. See *Lettres et Entretiens*, vol. i, p. 394, and cf. the games at the Abbaye-aux-Bois. They have always been in honour in the tradition of convent education.

punishments which children care about, in emulation and in change. An unruly girl is sent up a class and the mistress she leaves is asked to believe that another may do at least as much for the child as she did. *Everything* that can have a formative influence is to be used, the whip if necessary [1]; but on the whole the spirit of the children is too good to need drastic measures. "When one is punished the others are sorry, but they do not take sides. They go to the right authorities and do not carry tales from one another, nor do they make mischief." [2] A world of character-training may be said to underlie this utterance.

It was held that the children should be healthily occupied, and for that reason a variety of parlour games was provided for them. "Ayez des *Dames*, des *Jonchets*, des *Trous-Madame*," [3] the foundress wrote at one time, and we know that she also kept the children busy with amateur theatricals and with music. The big girls were expected to help to dress the little ones, and to watch over their daily tasks. Such responsibilities were looked upon as an honour and as a reward, as also was the position of those who wore the black or flame-coloured ribbon; the former, some twenty of the eldest girls, assisted the nuns in the capacity of prefects, and were responsible for much of the order of the school. These generally joined the Order. The latter, chosen from among the blues and yellows, shared their duties and some of their privileges. We cannot, however, claim that they were the first prefects known to girls' schools, as the Ursulines clearly had their *Dixainières*.[4]

[1] See *Lettres et Entretiens*, vol. i, p. 54, where the matter is treated sensibly, and cf. vol. i, p. 23 of the same book, where the foundress advocates continual vigilance to prevent any cause arising for resorting to punishment.

[2] Letter to the Abbess of Gomerfontaine from Madame de Maintenon.

[3] *Lettres et Entretiens*, vol. ii, p. 332.

[4] See Chap. V, above.

Even the spiritual formation of the nuns is treated, and that in a lofty strain which makes one forget at times that the foundress is looking upon the closed garden of religious life from outside its walls. Interior self-discipline, she tells the nuns, is to be preferred to corporal austerities. "Make it your practice, never to be over eager, always so to possess yourselves that you never utter one word more than you had resolved. Regulate your walk and your demeanour, and act in all things with the peace that becomes a religious."

Was she conscious of the influence of her Ursuline teachers when she wrote those words? or again when she said: "Speak always with modesty and only of necessary subjects. Avoid familiarity with the children; at recreation you can join heartily in a laugh without losing that self-restraint which should characterise a religious. In this way you will influence for good the children under your care."

Madame de Maintenon openly refers to the Ursulines when she impresses upon the mistresses to keep away from the children when not actually on duty. This aloofness, noticed by her in her youth, she rightly holds to have been a power for good. She encourages the mistresses to guide the children's confidence towards those in authority. She tells them that they must see all that happens, but that it is not always expedient to let the children know all that one has seen. They are to keep the girls from whispering and exclusive friendships, to be kind, vigilant, very silent, and to make way for the action of God.

The high ideals of St. Cyr seem to have been splendidly carried out during the time the school endured,[1] and

[1] The Chevalier de Boufflers, visiting the school a short time before its suppression in 1792, writes: "Never has an intention been so carefully tended and so

these ideals left a lasting impression upon French educational traditions. Like Port Royal, St. Cyr was a hot-house, an exotic forcing ground for the French spirit. Of the girls brought up by the Dames de St. Louis, the Curé de St. Sulpice, Monsieur de la Chétardie, could write during the life of the foundress: "Here, one may see children, serious but unconstrained, joyful but not childish, modest without any trace of affectation, learned without ostentation, pious and yet free from misplaced devotion. . . . Their teachers seem to have found the secret of cultivating intelligence as soon as it first manifests itself, and of training the course of its development. The studies here are proportioned to the ages of the children and to their capacities. Here, talents are brought to perfection, faults are corrected, individual temperaments are considered. The wise, attentive and prudent care taken of the children is the product of mellow wisdom and an enlightened mind rather than of mere academic theory."[1]

The age which inspired this thoughtful criticism must truly have been possessed with a high ideal, a definite tradition, and examples of true education.

scrupulously carried out by those who did not originally conceive it; never has anything remained so long unchanged." (Quoted by Dr. Barnard in *Madame de Maintenon and St. Cyr*, p. 121.)

[1] *Lettres sur l'Education*, p. 284.

Chapter VII

THE BREAK

" Une contre-révolution ne doit pas être une révolution contraire mais le contraire d'une révolution." [1]

WHEN Hélène Massalska, now Countess Potocka, returned to Paris in 1806, after twenty years' absence, she entered upon a new world. She was struck by the complete change which had been brought about in French Society. New customs prevailed everywhere, the very hours for meals and for entertainments being adapted to those English fashions which had now taken a hold upon Society.

" On the morning after her arrival, Hélène went out to visit Paris. She found that, although the traces of the Revolution had been in some measure effaced, enough remained for her to be able to judge of the horrors through which the capital had passed. The words ' hotel ' and ' palace ' were now replaced by some such phrase as ' Maison ci-devant Bourbon ' or ' Maison ci-devant Condé.' The streets which of old had been known by Saints' names now bore those of patriots or of one of the philosophers in vogue. The vehicles standing for hire at the street corner were the private carriages that had been confiscated from the nobles. Books, richly bound and stamped with the armorial bearings of ancient families, were piled up in the little second-hand shops which then, as now, lined the river-side, and in the windows might be also seen magnificent portraits, stolen in like manner from princely houses. . . .

" Of these houses a very large number were closed. Others were let out as flats or lodgings, with a shop newly opened on the ground floor. The escutcheons had been

[1] Joseph de Maistre.

in most cases removed from the entrance, and were replaced by revolutionary inscriptions. . . . Here and there, through a half-opened door, might be seen some vast quadrangle, in which of old the brilliant carriages were wont to succeed one another. Now grass was pushing its way up through the cobble stones of the court-yard and had, in some cases, even invaded the marble steps which led up to the great doorway. . . .

"L'Abbaye-aux-Bois was shut; its abbess dead; its inmates dispersed. The old prioress lingered on in a miserable room in the neighbourhood tended by a lay-sister who had refused to leave her. The Church, however, was open and used by the public. . . ."[1]

These outward changes were symbolic of the complete revolution within, of the new spirit which had not indeed supplanted the old, nor even mingled with it, but which was striving with the overwhelming force of its long pent-up energy to sweep all before it. The ideas of Rousseau and of Voltaire, the anti-religious factors which already in 1764 had expelled the Society of Jesus, the materialistic and atheistic views of the leaders of the Terror threatened to engulf the nation and to rob it of its soul. Now was inaugurated that strange dichotomy by which France, the most homogeneous of nations, was for so long a time to be crippled. On one side stood tradition, ancient culture, religion; on the other, a new philosophy, an executive terribly alive and terribly efficient, a democracy which had founded itself upon atheism and revolution and so had damaged its cause in the eyes of many rightly thinking people.

[1] *Histoire d'une grande Dame au XVIII Siècle*, vol. ii, p. 296. Many of these details are taken by the author, L. Perey, from the fifth volume of Madame de Genlis's *Mémoires*.

Speaking in our own day of the Russian Revolution, Nicholas Berdyaev says: "When a revolution has happened in the destiny of a nation, when it has suffered that misfortune, there is only one way out of it. One must accept the event as sent by Providence, accept it as all the great sufferings and misfortunes of life, all great trials must be accepted. But one must resist with all one's might the temptation to revolution, one must remain faithful to what is sacred, going down with lamps into the catacombs and bearing misfortune in a spirit of expiation. One must help the life-giving currents, through which the revolution evolves, into the opposite, into positive creation. . . . Both the experiences of history and our own moral experience teach us that revolutions can only be defeated by post-revolutionary forces, by elements different from those which dominated before or during them."[1]

Three main ideas from the above passage may help us to fathom the significance of those crucial years which could not but leave an indelible mark upon the tradition of education. We are told, in the first place, that the spirit of revolution must be faced by the totally contrary spirit of voluntary and even vicarious suffering; for thus only will healing be brought to a wounded world. Secondly, it is said that those only can benefit Society who know how to utilise whatever life-giving currents actually flow in the stream of thought and energy now sweeping all before it. Thirdly, we are shown the necessity of some post-revolutionary force to intervene at a moment when past and present welter in utter confusion.

Such a confusion existed in the world of French Education when Madeleine Sophie Barat, aged twenty-one, went

[1] *Thoughts on the Russian Revolution*, two essays of which are translated by D. B. (Sheed & Ward). Page xx.

to Amiens in 1800 to take up work in an unpretentious girls' school, and there met her destiny. In the past few years, she, indeed, had " gone down with lamps into the catacombs," and had borne heart-searching sufferings. Though she did not know it, she was called to utilise the life-giving currents flowing around her, and to oppose to the chaotic conditions brought about by the Revolution, the post-revolutionary force of a new spirit and a new Teaching Order, deeply rooted in the past, but with an organisation wholly fitted for the times.

The education question had been debated by the Revolutionary Government since 1791, when Talleyrand proposed to the Constituent Assembly " a new system of public and gratuitous instruction common to all citizens." This first proposal, by which well-graded and co-ordinated primary, secondary, and technical schools were to be set on foot, remained a dead letter, as did those of Condorcet, Danton, Lakanal, and Joseph Chénier.

In 1704, a decree abolished the old *collèges de plein exercice*, though somehow the one-time Jesuit College of *Louis-le-Grand*[1] had managed to survive the Reign of Terror, now changing its ill-omened name to that of *L'Institut des Boursiers*, now calling itself *Collège Egalité*. It was in this year that Grégoire was able to say that national education was in ruins, since there only remained some twenty languishing secondary schools, while only sixty-seven of the six hundred districts had any provision for primary education.[2]

As for girls' schools, they were practically non-existent. We have seen, how, here and there, a few pupils were grouped

[1] The name of the *Collège de Clermont* had been changed to that of Louis-le-Grand in 1682. See appendix B of *The French Tradition in Education.*

[2] Speech before the Convention made in August 1794, and quoted by Mgr. Audollent in *L'Ecole* for October 1933 (article, " Pédagogie Chrétienne ").

together round a teacher, often a nun who had been driven from her convent. Of these little schools, one held in the Rue de la Cerisaie, Paris, as early as 1796, had been opened by Madame Desfontaines, formerly a member of the congregation called *Sœurs de Sainte-Aure.* Encouraged by many priests and by noblemen, such as the Marquis de Clermont-Gallerande, Madame Desfontaines kept her school open through all vicissitudes until, at the time of the Restoration, her friends were able to obtain for her royal patronage. Then in the Rue de Reuilly, Faubourg Saint-Antoine, the mistresses united to form the congregation of Sainte-Clothilde, a congregation which is specially distinguished by its family spirit, the whole organisation being planned to bring the nuns and children into the close and friendly contact of a well-conducted home.[1]

Another girls' school destined to grow into a great institution, but of a widely different type, was that of Madame Campan, a former lady-in-waiting to Marie Antoinette, who, together with an ex-nun, had since the 9th Thermidor, 1794, given to a small number of girls an education in accordance with her own Christian and refined upbringing.[2] Hither came, in 1795 ,Hortense de Beauharnais and her cousin Emilie, thus uniting the new institution to that of Madame de Maintenon, by a chain of which Napoleon was to be the chief link. For the Consul, who, as a young officer, had some few years earlier removed his sister, Marianne, from St. Cyr on the very eve of the fall of that great convent, now came to visit his step-daughter and his niece and to play " Louis XIV " to their school-fellows. At Ecouen, whither Madame Campan removed in 1808,

[1] See *Une Educatrice, La Mère Desfontaines*, by A. Bessières, S.J., a work based on the constitutions of *Sainte Clothilde*, and on unpublished MSS. giving the history of the congregation.

[2] See *De l'Education*, Madame Campan.

the daughters of Napoleon's officers received his visits, and saw him enter into every detail of an organisation which was, *in theory*, very little different from St. Cyr, but which, *in spirit*, was separated by the wide gulf of the Revolution. When we see this officer of a Republican army examining the household work, which, he considered, should constitute almost the whole of a girl's curriculum, slipping his hand familiarly into the stocking one pupil was darning, and marking his satisfaction by ordering jam and cream for *goûter*, we find ourselves very far from *la distinction* which characterised the intercourse of girls and royal visitor at St. Cyr. Nor do we find in the restless, ambitious atmosphere of the new institution, where the world seemed to be full of sudden rises to fortune, of prosperous matches, and of boundless changes, the same reasonableness, the same firm basis of principle which was the hall-mark of Madame de Maintenon's creation. Religion was, it is true, placed as the foundation of education at Ecouen, but one does not find in the writings of Madame Campan the lofty and disinterested spirit, the true convincing Catholic note which rings through the letters and conversation of her predecessor.

Ecouen made an important contribution to posterity by handing on that practical and definitely feminine element which had always played so large a part in the education of French girls before the Revolution. Napoleon certainly was narrow and far from liberal in his views of what a girl should know,[1] but the benefit of preserving the practical tradition was seen towards the end of the century, when the first *lycées* for girls in no way attempted to copy slavishly the colleges established for their brothers.[2]

[1] For a discussion of this question see Gréard's *Education et Instruction, enseignement secondaire*, vol. i, p. 192, et seq., where Napoleon's letters are cited.

[2] Cf. what S. Burstall has to say of the North London Collegiate School under Miss Buss (*Retrospect and Prospect*), and cf. *Girton College*, 1869–1932, by B. Stephens.

However, for the real spirit of Madame de Maintenon, for the piety, solid foundation of reason, for the culture and training in manners characteristic of the *ancien régime* the best families looked elsewhere.[1] Just as the Fathers of the Faith found their schools quickly filled to overflowing, while the State *lycées* too often remained deserted, so too could Madame Campan say plaintively: "the Convents opened again and the years 1805, 1806, 1807, were very disadvantageous to my school."[2]

Little of this had come to pass in 1800, when Sophie Barat went to Amiens, but a prevision of the future seemed to have been given at least to one man.[3]

Léonor de Tournély, a priest scarcely more than thirty years of age, had died in 1797, before seeing the realisation of that ideal for which he had spent his powers. A Jesuit at heart, in those days when the Society was still awaiting the word which would call it once more to life, de Tournély had gathered together a small association of men with aspirations similar to his own. Taking the name of "Fathers of the Sacred Heart"[4] they determined to join the Society of Jesus, should it be re-established in their lifetime, and meanwhile to oppose all their energies to the tide of evil around them and to spread the Kingdom of Christ in their land. Firmly believing in the essential goodness of the ancient traditions of their country, they turned with hope to the younger generation, and it was typical of the tradition which they represented that they set a vital importance upon the education of girls.

[1] For a discussion of this point see Nettement, *De la Seconde Education des Filles*, pp. 357–92, and cf. Dr. Barnard, who takes the opposite view in *Madame de Maintenon and Saint-Cyr*, p. 217.

[2] *De l'Education*, Campan, vol. ii.

[3] *Notice sur le Révérend Père de Tournély*, printed at "St. Norbert," Vienna.

[4] This title had to be changed to "Fathers of the Faith" for political reasons.

So, de Tournély dreamed of a Society of the Sacred Heart for women, which would hand on to the girlhood of the nation the religious, moral, and intellectual heritage of the past. He was faithful to this dream in days of peril and of exile, in want, and in apparent failure. His very failure, indeed, is symbolic, marking as it does the transition from past to present, and showing how old ideas stood in need of a new setting. Naturally enough, Father de Tournély turned to the past, seeking therefrom the realisation of his dream. Princess Adélaïde Louise de Bourbon-Condé,[1] aristocratic, intellectual, deeply religious, once a pupil of the Benedictines at Beaumont-les-Tours, and now anxious to consecrate her life to God as a nun, seemed the very person most fitted to undertake the work projected. The Princess tried and failed. Her call was for a quieter and more contemplative life. Not for her to understand and meet the new forces at work. She had no gift to bestow on post-revolutionary France, nothing that could help it to raise itself to the level of its ancient glory.

Father de Tournély died under the disappointment, handing on to Father Varin[2] as a sacred trust the mission which he had so much at heart. Father Varin met Louis Barat in Paris, and thus became acquainted with his sister. And so, very characteristically of the changed times, it was to be the daughter of a simple vintner who was to achieve what the Princess could not accomplish. A girl with a most modern and far-reaching education was providentially set in Father Varin's path, and he recognised in her the fitting instrument for the much-needed work.

So Sophie Barat stood as a link between past and

[1] See *La dernière des Condé*, Marquis de Ségur.

[2] *Vie du Révérend Père Joseph Varin*, A. Guidée. See also Bibliography, works published on the Society of the Sacred Heart.

present, and her surpassing achievement seems to have been her union of the two. She might have been reactionary. There was much in her home surroundings, in her religious convictions, we may say in her character, to make her so. Her education might have made her ultra-modern, in which case she would have imposed upon her newly founded schools a boys' programme, very like that which had occupied the years of her childhood. But her genius dominated past and present, or, rather, as her daughters most firmly believe, she was herself made the instrument of a higher power, which used her according to her own deepest wish and according to the perfection of her self-dedication.

PART II

THE HANDING ON OF THE TRADITION

S. MAGDALENA SOPHIA BARAT
FUNDATRIX SORORUM A. S. CORDE JESU.

Chapter I

BEGINNINGS

"High achievements and great types are in a sense the despair of those who attempt to emulate them ; at the same time they prick the tamest courage to exert itself."[1]

It was in Amiens, a town noted for the peaceable character of its inhabitants, and for that very reason sought as a refuge by many noble French families, that the Fathers of the Faith had recently opened a boys' school in the Rue de l'Oratoire,[2] attracted thither by the offer of a new recruit, the future Father Sellier.[3] Louis Sellier had occupied a small post in the local administration from the years 1793 to 1797. Having opened with Monsieur l'Abbé Bicheron, formerly tutor to a young nobleman, a boys' school for which the families of d'Harcourt, de Choiseul, de Gramont-d'Aster, and many others were feeling the instant need, he now wished to begin his studies for the priesthood and to enrol himself among the Fathers of the Faith. To them, therefore, he had handed over the above-mentioned establishment. This school, which was to have a very rapid expansion, was destined to be transferred first to the faubourg Noyon, and finally, after much Government opposition, was to become the famous Jesuit College of St. Acheul. It is from the literature that has sprung up around it that we get much of our information of the Amiens of 1800, the little cobble-stoned town spread out around its glorious cathedral, surrounded by flat country which is but little enlivened by the quiet windings of the Somme.[4]

Amiens, then, seemed marked out as the place most fitted

[1] J. Erskine Stuart, *The Society of the Sacred Heart*, p. 114.

[2] So called because the Oratorians had had a school there in pre-revolutionary days.

[3] *Vie du Révérend Père Sellier*, A. Guidée.

[4] *Souvenirs de St.-Acheul*, A. Guidée.

for Madeleine Sophie Barat and her companions to begin their work, all the more so as there were already some new recruits waiting to join them, one of whom, Henriette Grosier, was prepared to hand over the little school which she had been keeping, not very successfully. Mlle. Loquet was to be the Superior of the new establishment, Mademoiselle Barat was to take the highest class, while the others would take charge of the younger children and of the household work. It was natural for the young mistresses to look for help and guidance to the Fathers who were teaching in the boys' school, and as thus the establishment in the Rue de l'Oratoire was to have a marked influence upon the schools of the Society of the Sacred Heart, it will be of interest to study it more closely.

In November 1801, when Sophie Barat first reached Amiens, the rector was Father Bruson, while the famous Father Loriquet,[1] already known for his wonderful erudition his hair-breadth escapes from revolutionary fury, and the astonishing number and variety of school textbooks which appeared yearly from his pen, took the sixth class (the lowest), though he also occupied the post of prefect of studies.

The Fathers of the Faith made no secret of their common aspiration to mould their way of life and of teaching on that of the Society of Jesus, at present suppressed, but which, it was evident, would be re-established before very long. Already the school at the Rue de l'Oratoire ran on the traditional lines so well known in France for the last two centuries. The studies were excellent, the attitude of the boys to their teachers was that of affectionate sons in a large family—witness the cheerful way they were to put up with the inconveniences of changing houses and beginning

[1] *Vie du Révérend Père Loriquet.*

life in most inadequate and unfinished buildings.[1] Several sodalities had been organised, some pious like the Congregation of Our Lady and that of the Holy Angels, some for the relief of the poor, as the soup kitchens. The boys' entertainments had drawn together the élite of the town and they had been much encouraged by Father Loriquet to form an excellent orchestra.

The talk of their school life brought home to their sisters the fact that nothing had as yet been provided for them. When on November 21st, 1801, Mother Barat arrived, with the sum of six francs in her pocket, a house was awaiting her in the Rue Martin bleu-Dieu,[2] with some twenty pupils and a great field of work.[3] Poverty was, however, to prevail for a time. It was true that the second new recruit, Mlle. Geneviève Deshayes, had a good many personal possessions which she proceeded to sell, but the pensions of the girls brought in only a small sum, and the total revenue seems to have been badly administered by Mlle. Loquet and a paid housekeeper who soon usurped the confidence of the not very judicious Superior. However that may be, the young teachers had to take in sewing to augment thereby their slender income. By the light of a solitary candle and after a hard day's work they would sit together in unforgettable conversations, exchanging ideas, communicating to one another their ideals and hopes.

As yet the little gathering was without a name. They were quite clear in their determination to make the Sacred Heart of their Master the object of their devotion, their symbol and their badge, but for the moment this

[1] *Vie du Révérend Père Loriquet.*

[2] So called from a mediæval statue of the Eternal Father, dressed in blue and placed in a niche of the house of Martin.

[3] *Histoire de la Vén. Mère Madeleine Sophie Barat,* Mgr. Baunard.

intention had to be kept secret because of certain political associations which had centred round this image since the rising of La Vendée. There was besides, under the name of *Dilette di Gesù*, a congregation even now being founded in Rome according to Father de Tournély's ideas. Should this congregation develop, then would the little band at Amiens find in its ranks the life of which they dreamed. As a matter of fact, the Roman essay proved a failure and so Madeleine Sophie Barat, and those of her companions who remained faithful, were in very truth the first members of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

Not all persevered. One, Octavie Bailly, felt more drawn to the life of Carmel; another, Mlle. Loquet herself, soon proved to be temperamentally unfitted for a life in which intense activity is based on deep and constant prayer. Her inward unrest reacting upon her methods of government had given others much to suffer, and she left in December 1802, chiefly preoccupied as to who could possibly succeed her. The rest of the household, it would seem, did not share her perplexity, and all unanimously acclaimed Mother Barat when Father Varin placed her, though only twenty-three, in the position of Superior.

This same year saw two important innovations. Poor and overworked as they were, the little company had opened a free school for the children running wild in the neighbourhood, a school where with the help of monitresses and by means of mutual teaching, one or two mistresses managed a large number. The boarding school having also increased, the household was transferred to the Rue Neuve. By June 1803 there were four new members: Adèle Bardot, from Bourgogne; Mlle. de Cassini, the daughter of the famous astronomer; Mlle. du Terrail, a former pupil of St. Cyr; and Mlle. Emilie de Charbonnel,

who was to be one of the foremost figures in the new Society.

The school was now really prospering, but a new trouble arose in the serious ill-health of the young Superior, who was obliged to spend three months in Paris in the spring of 1804. While undergoing treatment there she came into contact with persons anxious to help in the much-needed work of women's education; and it is of interest that at one time she was offered l'Abbaye-aux-Bois. The historic school passed, however, into the hands of an older congregation, whose houses, independent one of the other, were even now reconstituting themselves. The sisters of Notre Dame, founded by St. Peter Fourier[1] as early as the seventeenth century, had behind them a long tradition of educational work. Under them the Abbaye became a famous Parisian school, sister house of the still better-known convent *Les Oiseaux*.

In May 1804 Mother Barat returned to Amiens and some months later presided over the second transfer of the school to the Rue de l'Oratoire, where the building now vacated by the Fathers became the girls' school.[2] Here it was to remain for over a hundred years. Henriette Ducis, Félicité Desmarquest, Rosalie Debrosse, and Thérèse Duchatel now joined the congregation; and it will be well after this brief survey of events to make some acquaintance with these first Mothers whose characters witness to a tradition in the past, and help to hand on that tradition in the future.

[1] In 1789 this congregation had over 4,000 religious in ninety monasteries, and were bringing up thousands of girls, the greater number gratuitously. (See *Un Monastère de Saint Pierre Fourier "Les Oiseaux,"* René Bazin, p. 170.)

[2] Details of the following events can be found in the unpublished Journal of the Convent in Amiens, as well as in the various biographies of Mother Barat mentioned in the Bibliography.

The first thing one notices about them is that they are all interesting and marked personalities. Of many of them it may be said that they would have stood out in any circumstances. They have in common a deep and fervent preoccupation that rises above the petty cares of schoolkeeping and the management of children. It must be clear from the outset that they, and all the members of the Society which is now being founded, are bound together, not by any pedagogical theory, nor by a preconceived plan of action. Their work is but a means of expression of that inner force which is driving them to restore all things in Christ. Schoolkeeping is not the only undertaking they contemplate; for generosity is their characteristic, a generosity of mind which cannot be confined within a narrow horizon and will find many outlets for its zeal. But if these first members do not meet as schoolmistresses, it is remarkable how very decidedly they can speak on the subject of education, and here again we can trace the strong tradition that lies behind them. Their letters at this time bear witness to many a misgiving as to the success of their enterprise. They have much to tell of the difficulties under which they labour, but they seem little troubled by doubts or perplexities as to *how* the work should be carried on. These women, owing allegiance to Benedictines, Ursulines, Visitation nuns, and to Madame de Maintenon, have clear ideas as to the bringing up of girls, and they do not even allow their constant intercourse with a great and flourishing boys' school to make them lose their level-headed vision of the peculiar mission of womanhood. Even Mother Barat, who had never known convent life and who had been reared upon the intellectual food which made a scholar of her brother, passed unattracted by the classical programmes of St. Acheul

and settled on a solid and traditional basis the education of her children.[1]

But to return to the first members. Geneviève Deshayes was thirty-four years of age when she joined the newly formed Society.[2] Left free and wealthy by the early death of her parents, she had thrown herself with ardour into every kind and generous activity of which Amiens could boast. Utterly unworldly in outlook, she had nevertheless a certain artistic clinging to elegance of dress and a marked refinement of taste which made her wardrobe famous in the town. It was the proceeds from the sale of these dresses of hers which helped on the struggling congregation in its first days. Mlle. Deshayes had often shown herself calm and intrepid in the days of the Revolution when, like so many other women, she was instrumental in saving proscribed and hunted priests. From the beginning she played a leading part in the history of the Society, where as Superior of the second foundation and Mistress of Novices for many years she was a constant help and support to Mother Barat.

Henriette Grosier, like Sophie Barat, had also dreamed of the peace of Carmel.[3] Indeed, it is remarkable how frequently this attraction is found among the members of the Society and how strongly it impressed itself upon the Order. Henriette had had some experience in the school which her aunt, a nun driven from her convent by the social upheaval, had managed to keep going in spite of obstacles. She too was destined to do lasting work, especially by establishing new foundations which were so soon to be asked for throughout France.

[1] We have the Syllabus for 1805. See Part II, Chap. III.

[2] Notice of Mother Deshayes. Also *Histoire de la Vén. Mère Madeleine Sophie Barat*, p. 58.

[3] *Histoire de la Vén. Mère Madeleine Sophie Barat*, p. 61.

Mlle. de Cassini [1] was the daughter of the famous astronomer, director of the observatory. Her mobile and lively temperament fitted with difficulty into the austere setting of religious life, and she soon left the Congregation, with which, nevertheless, she ever kept up friendly relations and to which she was to return before her death. Her presence must have left its mark in those first years of formation, and to her may be attributed the prominent place given to scientific geography, astronomy, and map making, in the first programme of studies. "These are the elements among which I have been brought up," she would say, alleging her incapacity to teach other subjects. One of the many services which she rendered to her Superior was to point out with frankness that she had so far under-estimated the capacity of Mlle. de Charbonnel.

In the light of history, Emilie de Charbonnel de Jussac [2] stands out as the most remarkable of all Mother Barat's first companions, though in the beginning she gave a very contrary impression. Indeed her arrival, as witnessed by a curious schoolgirl hanging out of a window of an upper story, has remained legendary. Father Varin had announced, apologetically, his acceptance of a new subject whose sterling qualities of heart would make up somewhat for a lack of brilliant exterior. When, however, a shy, dowdy little woman arrived on a broken-winded white horse, on which she had ridden some 160 miles, and begged in embarrassed, lisping words to be admitted into the Community, Mother Barat, for all her penetration, was somewhat taken aback. Anxiously she entrusted the new member with a few minor household details, and the partial

[1] *Histoire de la Vén. Mère Madeleine Sophie Barat*, p. 84.

[2] *Notice de la Rév. Mère de Charbonnel.* See also *Quelques Religieuses du Sacré Cœur*, vol. i.

care of some younger children. Emilie de Charbonnel seemed quite satisfied. She had omitted to mention the excellent education she had received at the Ursuline Convent of Monistrol where her aunt had been Superior, an education which, backed by the cultural tradition of an ancient and noble family, had given her a literary training and a *savoir-vivre* that fitted her excellently for her new life, while it had also made of her a good mathematician and a capable administrator. She had also passed over in silence the fact that her family counted as a racial inheritance an intrepid loyalty and an unbounded endurance in the service of its king. While her grandfather had perished in the prisons of the revolutionists, her father had died fighting for the royalist cause, her only brother had been shot outside the walls of his own château on account of the tempestuous demonstrations of his convictions, Emilie herself had been the mainstay of her mother, aunts, and sisters when these had been hunted, robbed of their lands and possessions, imprisoned, and persecuted. She had known what it was to tour the country in ever-changing disguises abetted by the devoted affection of the surrounding peasants. She, the most timid of mortals, had learned the art of housebreaking, when it became necessary to extract from a hiding-hole in her château the coffer which contained family papers and a large sum of money. Braving the new " owners " and their enormous hound, she had by night lifted and replaced the seals with which cupboards were closed, opened these from the back, and in mortal terror but perfectly calm outwardly had succeeded in carrying off her treasures. Equally terrified but equally self-possessed she had watched long hours alone beside the dead and had comforted many a broken heart among the country people of Monistrol. Yet she never lost her deep

timidity of heart, a timidity which hid at first sight the distinction of her mind and the exquisite politeness of her intercourse. All she made clear to the young Superior was the whole-hearted character of her offering, and Mother Barat could never resist generosity.

It was Mlle. de Cassini, as has been said, who, in the long walks the two took together with the children, realised the wide and serious outlook of her new companion and the lucidity of her ideas. By her advice, Mother Barat confided the lowest class to Mlle. de Charbonnel, and soon the mistresses in adjoining rooms were reporting that the lessons overheard were luminously clear.[1] It was tempting to eavesdrop, they would say. Soon Mother de Charbonnel got into touch with the masters of the boys' school and began to discuss with them plans and syllabuses. It was said of the children whom she had taught in that class that they were grounded upon such solid principles that their work showed afterwards the benefit they had derived from early teaching. Few people in the Society have had such scope as was now opened out for Mother de Charbonnel and few have surpassed her in devoted labour. Called to assist at all the councils of study, she had a preponderating influence in the shaping of the curriculum and in the formation of the young mistresses. Her influence may be traced not only in the general character of the syllabus evolved but also in many details. As the metric system was, just at this time, being introduced into France, Mother de Charbonnel drew up plans and charts for the school. In the absence of proper apparatus, she traced her geometrical diagrams on the floor of a garret, and gave geometry its proper place in the curriculum. As text-

[1] *Histoire de la Vén. Mère Madeleine Sophie Barat*, pp. 87–8, also *Quelques Religieuses du Sacré-Cœur*, p. 11.

books were rare, Mother de Charbonnel would sit up half the night writing out plans, extracts, definitions, or making charts to help the young mistresses. She it was who included in the history syllabus a short survey of comparative religions and of comparative language-study. Her girls venerated this gentle and simple woman, and would listen spellbound when on a winter's evening she would relate hairbreadth and daring adventures which "happened to some one I knew." The listeners soon guessed that they too knew the heroine and realised the extraordinary intrepidity of this timid class mistress.

It was not only as a born teacher that Mother de Charbonnel's influence was felt in the Society. For over fifty years she occupied the post of assistant-general and was Mother Barat's right hand, founding houses, carrying, now here and now there, the ideals and the teaching of the foundress. It was a jest among the religious that she could furnish a big empty house out of a few rags and a little straw, yet she abhorred the word "economy" and wanted to substitute for the French term *économe* the less usual one of *procuratrice*. Four things, she would say, are necessary in the administration of a religious house: "a generous charity, great prudence, exactness in the discharge of duties, and a desire to give." From first to last, generosity was her characteristic.

A very different personality was Henriette Ducis,[1] niece of the poet of that name. More talented than learned, surnamed at home *l'oiseau* for the vivacity of her nature, she had not lost among the grave experiences of her girlhood that freshness of mind which showed itself in a ready ease of expression and a refinement of taste and manner.

In strong contrast to Henriette Ducis, Félicité Des-

[1] *Histoire de la Vén. Mère Madeleine Sophie Barat*, p. 95.

marquest, the eleventh of sixteen children born to a rich farmer of Picardie,[1] had matured early amid the responsibilities and privations of her home. She too, witnessing horrors and injustice, had dreamed of the quiet spaces of Carmel, but, like Madeleine Sophie Barat, she had been advised to consecrate her activity to an apostolic form of life. At Amiens she was noted for the serious and quiet influence which her rare perfection exerted upon the household. It was only natural to make her Mistress of Novices when, later, Mother Barat gathered together in Paris all the aspirants to religious life. To these novices Mother Desmarquest stood ever as a living type of the religious of the Sacred Heart. Outwardly undemonstrative, she was inwardly of an ardent nature which showed itself in the unwavering and ever self-sacrificing character of her devotedness. Long years of experience when added to her self-possession gave her great powers of judging character, and so made of her an excellent spiritual guide.

Of Rosalie Debrosse, Marie du Terrail and Thérèse Duchatel fewer details have come down to us. The first named accompanied Mother Barat when she went to make her first foundation at Grenoble, and was the recipient of many affectionate letters from the foundress.[2]

Finally we must speak of Madame Baudemont and Madame Copina, both formerly Clarisse nuns, who were not to remain in the Society, but whose presence was to create painful and long-protracted trouble. Both were excellent women, regular and devoted religious. Both had distinguished themselves by the courageous and intelligent help they had given to priests persecuted and condemned to death; some of whom they had saved from

[1] *Histoire de la Vén. Mère Madeleine Sophie Barat*, p. 96.
[2] *Lettres Choisies adressées aux Religieuses*, vol. i.

the scaffold. The record of their good works may be found in the biography of Father Loriquet. Their experience of life, the fact that they had belonged to a religious order, their age and reputation, seemed to mark them out for positions of confidence in the newly formed Society. When therefore in 1804 Mother Barat began to find it necessary to make frequent absences on account of new foundations, she thought it best, though not without some misgivings, to place Madame Baudemont at the head of the Community of Amiens. Her fears were justified. If some of the first companions of the foundress may be described as typifying the spirit of the Society of the Sacred Heart, Mother Baudemont may be taken as an anti-type. Shrewd, personal, and autocratic, she had not the selflessness nor the supernatural outlook of Madeleine Sophie Barat and her first companions. With the support of a priest, Monsieur de Sambucy de St. Estève, who also desired to take over the management of the Order, and supported by Madame Copina and some new recruits, Madame Baudemont quietly set up her authority against that of Mother Barat, whose worth she underestimated. Several years of division and anxiety ensued, the trouble being protracted partly by the difficulty of correspondence, partly by the intrigues of Monsieur de St. Estève, who sought to embroil the foundress with her ecclesiastical superiors. This is not the place to tell the complicated story [1] which ended in the departure of Madame Baudemont and Madame Copina, the drawing up and the approval of the Constitutions of the Society, and confirmation of the election of Mother Barat as Superior General. The crisis only ended in 1815, but it must be understood that during this period

[1] It is told at length in the *Life of St. Madeleine Sophie* (Burns and Oates), chap. xiii. Also in *Histoire Abrégée de la Société du Sacré Cœur*, pp. 70 *et seq.*

the school continued to augment in numbers and that outwardly, and even so far as the majority of the community was concerned, the peace and regularity of the religious house remained undisturbed. *Cor unum et anima una in Corde Jesu* was the motto adopted by the Society as it emerged from these days of trial. For this end the foundress had prayed and waited, never wavering in her desire to make the Heart of Jesus the centre of her devotion, ever aspiring to show that devotion by an untiring gift of self.

It seems right at this point, after having made acquaintance with the first members of the Society, to pause before passing on to the consideration of its educational work, and to attempt to arrive at some understanding of its composite personality. Personality tells in education, and no matter what prejudice the Society of the Sacred Heart may have encountered, no one has ever denied that it possesses a marked individuality of its own. In order to arrive at an understanding of its special characteristics it will perhaps be well to sketch in outline its constitutions, and then, if may be, to fix that elusive entity, the despair alike of poet and philosopher—call it spirit, ethos, form, personality, or what you will—that something which defies definition, abhors analysis, but will sometimes yield itself to sympathetic study.

Chapter II

THE SPIRIT

"Great literature has never been born inside four walls. It is tossed up from the sea, wrung from war, found by running streams, fed in pastures green, and heard best in the clash and clamour of opposing forces of men in earnest for life and liberty."[1]

IF this saying be true of literary expression, then surely it must be even more so of that concrete utterance of an inward spirit and a dynamic conviction, the foundation of a religious order. It was amid the clash of warring Europe that the great Benedictine abbeys made homes of peace by running streams and pastures green. The clamour of opposing forces in turbulent mediæval cities brought the friars to birth. St. Ignatius banded together his warrior sons to fight in earnest for life and liberty; and so too the great Teaching Orders of the nineteenth century, tossed up from the stormy sea of religious and social chaos, were each the expression of an inward spirit born amid strain and trouble.

The spirit of the Society of the Sacred Heart is one of utter devotion to the person of Jesus Christ. He is all in all to the religious. In Him and for Him their activity is directed. His Sacred Heart is therefore most fittingly the epitome of their devotion. All the documents of the Order, the letters, statutes, rules, and constitutions, the records, chronicles, and biographies are permeated by this spirit. Already in 1815 it was clearly visible in the Constitutions which were to be approved in Rome some eleven years later.

Much has been written about the Order, but nowhere perhaps more clearly or with more authority than in the little book, *The Society of the Sacred Heart*, published in 1914

[1] *England and the English*, Price Collier, p. 155.

by Reverend Mother Janet Erskine Stuart, sixth Superior General of the Society. It would seem best, therefore, to draw largely from her writings, and indeed, since this chapter aims rather at reproducing a tradition than of giving utterance to personal opinion, quotations will be freely used.

The Constitutions of the Society of the Sacred Heart are based upon those of St. Ignatius, so far as they may be adapted to an Order, essentially feminine in outlook, that aims at training girls to fulfil the peculiar mission of women along the lines which faith and tradition seem to define for Christian society. There was a time in the history of the Congregation when certain prominent members wished to model its Constitutions closely upon those of St. Ignatius, in such a way as to destroy its characteristic mode of activity and intercourse. The foundress suffered much, was willing to try experiments, but gradually won her way, to the lasting good of the Society.

It is the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience that properly constitute the status of a religious. By the vow of poverty, she renounces the free disposal of any temporal possession and, as a consequence, all temporal cares. Henceforward she will handle material things as a steward, but with nothing to gain or lose for herself, and from this aloofness she will obtain a peace that will give power to her work of education.

By the renunciation consequent upon her vow of chastity, a religious, far from killing her affections, directs them into deeper and wider channels. Children are very quick to recognise the spirit of consecration and to claim the nun as their own, theirs to honour and theirs to use. A nun is ready to answer every call, for to all she has given her powers and interest.

The vow of obedience places a religious at the service of

her Order, which, within the limits defined by the Constitutions, is free to use her gifts, her strength, her energy, her time. To be so used must ever be her consolation, to be utterly spent in its service, the highest honour to which she can aspire.

The Society of the Sacred Heart, like other Teaching Orders, adds for the choir religious a fourth vow, of consecration to the education of youth.[1] It is in order to safeguard these obligations and also to foster and make possible an abiding spirit of prayer that the religious keep to the enclosure of their houses, so far as this may be possible in the conditions of modern life. Many seemingly precious advantages are sacrificed to ensure this aloofness, but the peace and stability derived from the enclosure amply repay the cost. On children and students this peace reacts with a sense of home and security; for the nuns themselves it makes possible that union of prayer and quiet activity which is their aim.

Of this union of the two elements in the mixed life Reverend Mother Stuart says: "According to common teaching, the mixed life is blessed with a specially intimate likeness to the manner of living of Our Lord during His Life on earth.[2] No gift of self, however active, could equal the entire devotion with which He was at the service of every class of persons or individual need. No contemplative rule could measure itself against His nights of prayer after such days of work. It was a life such as had never been seen, and it would appear necessary that, as the Church has her contemplative Orders and her Congregations given to active

[1] Compare Part I, Chap. V, p. 59, note on the vow made by the Ursulines.

[2] The union of prayer and apostolate in the life of the Order is typified by Quattrini's statute in the nave of St. Peter's. The foundress is represented with the angel of contemplation on one side (as are the other Contemplative Saints), and she has on the other side a child symbolic of the work of education.

service, so there should arise within her a new kind of service, attempting the most difficult task of moulding itself upon the example of His twofold life; venturing to aim at a life of inward recollection, and even at the spirit of contemplation; and, at the same time, according to its measure, pursuing some of the forms of active devotedness which minister to the needs of souls.

"Here the great difficulty of the mixed life is felt. It must consist, not of two separate parts, but of an inward spirit of consecration which has two movements, like the vital act of breathing, and the outward and inward movement are each incomplete without the other. The deep intaken breath of prayer is given back again as the sound of a voice, carrying its gift from God. To those who have a call to the mixed life, it would appear impossible not to go out with that message to children or sinners or penitents or the tried and tempted, the suffering and dying, and, according to its power, 'compel them to come in,' that the house may be filled for the marriage-feast. No one can be in touch with even one great want of the human race without being, in heart, carried away by its magnitude, and being almost willing to undo himself for the sake of the great venture. Then must he stay his activity, set bounds to his ambitions and call to mind, that without the spirit of prayer and the necessary leisure for prayer, the effort will be in vain, giving forth only words that bear no message from God. There is a popular saying that the measure of a soul is that of its prayer, and those who have watched religious at work have no difficulty in verifying this. For real value of work, it is not talent that makes the difference, but prayer and all prayer stands for. As prayer is 'the issue of a quiet mind, of untroubled thoughts,' so it carries and gives a quiet mind and untroubled thoughts to others, and even

for these gifts its worth is felt in an atmosphere of peace and joy that lifts work above its troubles to a level of quiet if not of rest: 'in the peace of our spirit, the stillness of our thoughts, the evenness of recollection . . . the rest of our cares, and the calm of our tempest. . . .'[1]

"Religious leading the mixed life, have to give proof of something which belongs to both worlds, the unseen and the seen, and a certain stress of intensity cannot fail to be the result. Towards God, the contemplative side, towards others, the fully active, have to be awake, to be affirmed and to be expressed. The countenance and ways have to be sealed with both seals, signed and countersigned for both, while the inner life holds the key of each, and the two meet together in the quiet place of community life, which has its frontiers on the one and the other."[2]

Of the actual constitution of the Society and its mode of government, Reverend Mother Stuart goes on to say: "The Society of the Sacred Heart is governed by a Superior General who is elected for life; and by an assembly composed of the Assistants General who form her private council, and of the Superiors Vicar corresponding to the Provincials in other Orders. The name of Vicar was preferred by the Consultors of the Sacred Roman Congregation who examined the matter, as rendering better their position of close dependence on the central authority of which they are representatives. The Superiors Vicar are also local Superiors, governing one house themselves, and entrusted with the supervision over groups of houses. According to the first idea there was to be only one house of novitiate, in order that all the members of the new Institute might be trained in the same school,

[1] *Society of the Sacred Heart*, pp. 65 and 66, Janet Erskine Stuart.

[2] *Op. cit.*, pp. 111–2.

know each other personally, and, especially, be known by the Superior General. The increase of members, and other causes, before long made this impossible; there are at present eight[1] houses of novitiate, six in Europe, one in the United States, and one in South America. The novitiate lasts two years, at the end of which the religious vows of poverty, chastity and obedience are taken. . . . The five years following the vows are spent either in study or teaching or in the many other functions belonging to community life; they are looked upon as a time of training, but also of active participation in the duties and responsibilities of the whole Community. . . . At the end of five years, normally, there is a break, and six months of a second novitiate are given as a last probation to prepare for profession. The final preparation for this act is to go through the exercises of the long retreat of St. Ignatius, generally lasting for a period of twenty-six days. At the end of this time the Aspirants solemnly take again the vows of Religion, the choir religious adding to them a vow to consecrate themselves to the education of youth. This is not understood as an obligation to teach, but to concur in the work of education by the many other means of direct action in the training and education of children, or even by directing the intention of other kinds of service to the same end. Both choir religious and lay-sisters add to the vows of Religion a vow of stability or perseverance in the Order from which the Holy See alone can grant dispensation." [2]

In the English biography of St. Madeleine Sophie, we read: "The exterior qualifications looked for in one who wishes to enter the Society of the Sacred Heart are not

[1] There are, at date of writing, nine noviceships, a second one having been established in South America.

[2] *Society of the Sacred Heart*, pp. 24–7, Janet Erskine Stuart.

exorbitant. Her family must be respectable, her own reputation unblemished, her appearance unobjectionable, and her health good. Her judgment must be sound, and her will pliable and docile; her education suited to her condition and to the end of the Society. . . ."[1]

The details of the daily life as laid down in the Constitutions are simple and elastic, as seems most fitting for those engaged in the work of education. To this, indeed, has ever gone the largest share of the Society's labours, though many other activities are taken up by the religious. By means of intercourse with persons coming to the convent for help or guidance or for the solace of a disinterested friendship, by relief given to the necessitous, by writing books, by organising good works, by opening their houses for periods of retreat when rest and calm and spiritual refreshment give new life to various gatherings of girls and women, each house attempts, in its measure, to be for those who frequent it, a place of peace, of anchorage, of kindness, and of hope.

Writing the life of the foundress in a work so complete as to be virtually a history of her Order, Monseigneur Baunard, Rector of the University of Lille, speaks as follows: "Such is . . . this system of government, which was destined to rule over so great a number of souls, a system full of strength, energy and tenderness, of Divine wisdom, and of knowledge of human nature, a system in which the Heart of God and the heart of man are brought into such close and sacred relations. Drawn in great measure from the spirit of St. Ignatius, but still more from the teachings of the Gospel, its austere enthusiasm is combined with a spirit of moderation and practical prudence which guarantees the exercise of reason under the supreme

[1] *Life of St. Madeleine Sophie*, chap. xiv (Burns and Oates).

guidance of grace. Narrow views, petty details are as foreign to it as high-flown sentiment. It is severe in principle, yet appears easy and sweet because the severity is rather for the soul than for the body, and because love always sweetens the cross which it offers."[1]

To which testimony we may add that of Cardinal Recanati, who speaks of the Constitutions of the Society of the Sacred Heart as "a masterpiece of unity."[2]

After this glimpse into the minds of the educators let us look also at the spirit of the children of the Sacred Heart. To the nuns as educators this advice is given in the closing pages on the studies of the Society as described in a history of the Order: "Life is the touchstone of education. It is by considering the lives of our pupils in whatever sphere God may have placed them in this world that we are enabled to judge of the education we have given them. Let us guard against any looking to immediate results; on the contrary, with open eyes, and seeking always what is best, let us know how to sacrifice present good for more lasting fruits hereafter. If we wish to give to our children the two dispositions most necessary in our times, in order to help them to make their course through life a straight one, let us cultivate in them *repose of mind*, by supernatural principles, by contact with truth, and by habits of reflection; and also that *strength of will* which comes from a sense of duty and from habitual self-control."[3]

It is by a marked and very individual training that these precious dispositions may be engendered, and of this train-

[1] *Histoire de la Vénérable Mère Sophie Barat*, vol. i, p. 291.

[2] Quoted in *Life of St. Madeleine Sophie* (Burns and Oates), p. 175. The Constitutions received solemn approbation from Rome in 1826. An attempt to make some momentous changes was made in 1839, but after some years of experiment the Society returned to its former mode of government, making only some slight modifications necessitated by growing numbers.

[3] *Histoire Abrégée de la Société*, p. 271.

ing Reverend Mother Stuart is well fitted to speak, after her long years of experience, first as Superior Vicar of the English convents, and then as Superior General, in which capacity she visited the houses all over the world :

" It is obvious that so marked a system of training calls for types of educators equally distinct. Some educate by personal gift and influence. The influence of a great personality is always felt, whether educating directly or indirectly. . . . To the nuns of the Sacred Heart it is the Society that educates, they stand for it at the appointed hours to teach, or keep supervision, knowing that they have behind them its confidence and its authority. . . .

" Three sides of the training call for particular consideration : the studies, the discipline, and the training in conduct.

" The Society of the Sacred Heart has its own programme of studies, of which the foundations and principles are the same in all schools of the same grade, and the superstructure is adapted to the wants of each country in which this Society has founded houses. The programme of studies aims at giving as complete an introduction as girls can master, in their school years, to the various departments of study which may interest them in after life. The object, when it was drawn up, was to enable those who had gone through it to judge wisely of persons and things, to distinguish between the 'precious and the vile' in questions of literature, art, taste, conduct and manners ; and the studies which conduced most effectually to this end were considered relatively the most important. Next in order came those that were useful, and afterwards those that were considered at the time merely ornamental. . . . A scheme of studies resting on a permanent basis, with an harmonious programme and a possibility of being revised both in length and breadth, and of finding its own balance

in any country without losing its individuality, this is one of the great gifts that Blessed Mother Barat left behind her. Its strength lies in that it is a vertebrate organism; it keeps the same shape but it can grow as a living thing, and as a living thing also adapt itself to a new environment. At the same time it does not prohibit external tests, and the habit of personal independence in work, which is fostered, is a good preparation for any concentrated or specialised effort which may have to be made.

" The discipline in schools of the Sacred Heart has met with a great deal of criticism. Why these moments of strict silence? Why this supervision? Why this insistence on play? This opposition to sets and cliques and private friendships? Why these exercises in behaviour, like formal parade? Why such exacting persistence as to manners? All, in the main, for the same reason: because they conduce to the training of character; they exact self-control, and attention, and consideration for others, and remembrance, not in one way, but in a hundred ways. Self-control is so vital to the conduct of life that no price is too great to pay for the acquiring of the habit. . . . Why this persistent pursuit of manners? Because they, of all beautiful forms, can least be acquired ready-made, but are of slow growth. Because they give the two things which are the panoply and best ornament of girls and women, simplicity and security. . . .

" The question of supervision is the point that has met with the most criticism; but this does not usually come from those who have seen it at work. Ill-sounding names have been used, such as 'espionage' and 'suspicion,' which are quite unlike the reality as we know it. It sounds like a formidable system of ever-vigilant pursuit to find out something wrong. It is, on the contrary, like the vigilance of

mothers whose watchfulness nothing escapes, but who are not on the look-out for what is bad. It is a matter of observation, and pretty well-known, that suspicion and anxious watchfulness and expectation are more likely to provoke wrong-doing than to check it. Every right-minded child resents them, and others can easily find means to evade what is hateful. But when supervision is surrounded with an atmosphere of trust, when it goes by the principle: 'Don't have anything to hide and then you will never be afraid of being seen,' it acts in open daylight, and neither provokes resentment nor invites manœuvring to outwit its precautions. The bright, untroubled, straightforward eyes that we know, do not harbour resentment or mistrust; they are frank, and their word is believed; they quite understand. . . .

"Principles for the conduct of life are everything to a girl. They may, . . . in a well-guided school, be learned in the practice of everyday life. When children are allowed to complete their studies, and are not cut short in the best bloom of their awakening minds, the last years are rich with experience, proportioned to their development, in matters for which after-life will demand full exercise. The elder girls in a school have a position which gives them as much influence as they are able to exert. . . . In school-committees or sodalities, of which they may be members, they can learn something of the administration of funds and of the giving of accounts and reports. They may acquire a little insight into social problems and the right service of the poor; their minds will be besieged by such questions as soon as they take up their life in the world, and no education is now complete without some preparation for these rapidly-growing requirements. . . ." [1]

[1] *The Society of the Sacred Heart*, pp. 82–90.

Much more could still be said and much has been said elsewhere of the aims and ideals, the methods and spirit of the Sacred Heart. Nevertheless, with these brief ideas as a foundation, we shall probably find it easiest to make concrete these abstract realities by following the development of the Order and by examining, so far as may be possible, the work it has done during 136 years of existence.

Chapter III

AMIENS IN 1805

"God alone can teach the value of that exquisite work of His Hands, the soul of a child and He alone can give the teacher the respect, tact and gentleness which she needs in order to train it." (Saying of Julie Billiart).[1]

THE fond parents who on the first day of the school year in the Amiens of 1805 sent off their boys to the Faubourg Noyon and their girls to the Rue de l'Oratoire were far from looking upon these two schools as merely relieving them for a time of the care of their offspring. The French parent, as we have seen, had for years cherished very definite ideas about life and education, ideas for which many of the families settled in Amiens had already paid a great price. Though they now showed themselves ready to overlook many shortcomings in order to secure the fundamental basis of religious principles and liberal culture which had enriched their own childhood, nevertheless it was but natural that after the years of revolutionary trouble, they should watch over the upbringing of their children with an anxious and jealous care.

With regard to the boys' school they had guarantees. The name of Father Loriquet, as we have seen, was itself sufficient to win their trust. Had he not been brought up in the atmosphere of the schoolroom by his father, headmaster of the College of Epernay? At the University of Rheims he had closed a career of brilliant studies by winning the first prize or "Dictature" for rhetoric. Since then, he had travelled as private tutor, ever pursuing his

[1] Julie Billiart, friend and kindred spirit to Mother Barat, was founding in Amiens a school for the children of the poorer classes at the very time of which we are writing. Helped by Father Varin, this small beginning was to develop into the well-known Congregation of Notre Dame de Namur and the two Societies so closely associated in their origin were ever to maintain a close friendship. The quotation is taken from *Les Idées Pédagogiques de la Bienheureuse Julie Billiart.*

theological, literary, mathematical, and musical studies. Astronomy was his hobby, the editing of textbooks (the list of which runs to fifteen pages of his biography) his constant work. He was a successful schoolmaster as well as a much-respected priest.[1]

But what of the schoolgirls? Let us follow the demure *pensionnaire,* black-robed and gloved, with every vestige of a straying curl well housed within a barbarous hair-net. If we cross the threshold of the convent we may find her at morning study, seated *convenablement* in her black alpaca apron, with her feet " à la troisième position,"[2] learning her lessons with all the ardour of her ambitious little heart; for time is short and the bell will soon ring for class. If we enter we must do so unseen, or else all these girls will rise and sweep a stately curtsy "à trois temps" or "à six temps"[3] (they counted twelve when Monseigneur came to give the prizes), and under their downcast eyelids, which are an essential feature of their irreproachable *tenue*, they will subject us to a penetrating scrutiny from which nothing escapes.

While the girls await the signal for class, let us turn to the mistresses, who, in their sparely furnished rooms, behind the doors of the enclosure, are making preparations for the event.

Growing numbers in the school testify that they also have won the confidence of the parents, though for them the task must have been far from easy. It is indisputable that they owed much to the friendship and approval of the Fathers of the Faith, and that they were pioneers in the work of reconstruction. Nevertheless there could be no trifling in the matter of education, either for the noble

[1] *Vie du Révérend Père Loriquet*, Chaps. I and II.

[2] Directions from the *Leçons de Maintien*. [3] Ibid.

families of Amiens or for the rich farmers and townspeople who patronise the school. The lists show us that pupils are there from places as distant as Valenciennes, Paris, and Bruges. The mistresses to whom these girls were entrusted could not be expected at that date to possess University degrees or diplomas, indeed, they have not even been selected for special aptitude in teaching or for similarity of educational views.

It would seem that nowhere can we obtain a more convincing example of the force of the French tradition than in this moment of reconstruction. Under the leadership of a Superior who was herself something of a scholar, the ideas of Madame de Maintenon, of the Ursulines and the Benedictines, have fused with Mlle. de Cassini's brilliant scientific smattering, Mlle. Ducis's refined and poetical taste, and Madame Baudemont's severe common sense, into a clear and well-defined programme of which we are fortunate to possess details.

For on the 19th, 20th, and 21st of September, in the year 1805, the school of the Rue de l'Oratoire held a prolonged exhibition at which the drawings, written exercises, maps, charts, needlework, and embroidery of the pupils might be examined by the parents, who were also to be entertained by a "Dialogue of Madame de Maintenon, a Proverb of St. Cyr, a Lyrical Scene and some interludes of symphonies and chorus." These facts we get from a small book of twenty-eight pages, printed by J. B. Caron, the elder, printer to the Bishop. The programme contains, moreover, a plan of the oral examinations to be conducted on that day, a detailed syllabus of all the subjects studied, and the questions, or type of questions, that will be put to the pupils. From it we learn also the names of those "who have deserved to appear" at this examination (there

is a wealth of pedagogy in the phrase), and the town from which each girl comes. The whole concludes with a paragraph that shows a singular clearness of aim: "Some matters might have been cut out of this programme, the time having been too short to allow of their being taught to the children. Nevertheless, they are left in to meet the wishes of the parents who have desired to see the detailed plan of studies of this house. We have also had many inquiries as to the method followed in this school, whereby even abstract subjects are rendered easy and agreeable to the children. We should have been glad to satisfy this desire had it been possible to make it the matter of a programme. It may, however, be enough to state that we try to unite the useful with the agreeable. We aim at instructing while amusing our children; that is to say we have adopted the method so much admired by Racine at St. Cyr."[1]

With the aid of this document, of traditions faithfully handed on, of biographies, letters, and old chronicles, it is not very difficult to reconstruct the day of the little girl whom we have left sitting at her desk awaiting the signal for the day's work to begin.

There are five classes in 1805, the first being the highest. As the school grows, the number will rise to eight or ten; and above the first class will be formed *la classe supérieure* whose status may be compared to that of the *Philosophers* in

[1] An account of these open days and of the school is given in the *Annuaire du Département de la Somme* for 1806. There it is said: "On trouve réunis dans cet utile établissement les avantages précieux qu'offraient à l'admiration publique les maisons illustres de Saint-Cyr et de l'Enfant Jésus de Paris. A leur exemple ces respectables Institutrices placent dans la religion et les mœurs le point capital de l'éducation. Comme les Dames de Saint-Cyr elles travaillent à donner à l'instruction de leurs élèves, toute la perfection dont elles sont susceptibles, et à leur faire contracter ces manières pleines de noblesse et de grâces qui font l'appui des bonnes mœurs."

a Jesuit school, or the upper sixth doing higher studies in our secondary schools to-day. A nun has complete charge of every class, as was traditional in French convents, but with this difference, that she is not expected to manage more than twenty or twenty-five girls. Personal intercourse, and individual following up of the pupils not being possible with a larger number, it has always been the policy of the Society of the Sacred Heart to divide a class which reaches these dimensions. Each mistress will, as far as possible, teach the ordinary subjects, namely: Bible history, Church history, French grammar and language, literature and arithmetic. This last includes the new metric system, partnership, discount, mixtures, and book-keeping. Practical geometry and mythology are also included in the curriculum, so too is history, but as it is named apart from the classwork it was probably in the hands of a specialist mistress, the matter being so distributed through the various classes that a general outline of world history should have been studied by the end of the course. The prominence given to the ancient world is, no doubt, a relic of classical traditions, but as time goes on the history of France and of modern Europe will be stressed and the limits of ancient history will become more restricted.[1]

The list of masters, also given on the programme, shows that the girls were learning drawing from M. Chantriaux, singing from M. Delévacq, the harp from M. Delamotte, the piano from Madame Bulan, and the art of accompanying from M. Cornette, "organist of the Cathedral and of the house." The master for writing was M. Senépart, *fils*. Evidently, at least at this early date, the new Order bowed before the monopoly of this powerful corporation, for in 1808, writing to Mother Emilie Giraud at Niort on the

[1] See *Plan of Studies for* 1833.

subject of one of the children, Mother Barat says: "Let Mother Bernard give her writing lessons, *while you are waiting to get her a master*."[1] In 1819, to Mother Prevost she sends the advice that one of the young nuns at Chambéry should be taught "the principles of writing," especially "l'anglaise"[2]; for the house will not be able to afford a master.

The girls are regrouped for geography, which is apparently taught by a specialist, and also for domestic economy, both of which subjects appear to have been optional.[3] The lower division of geography study the matter from an "astronomical, physical, and political" point of view (the finger of Mother de Cassini is surely here). After considering the divisions of the countries they will learn something of the religion, government, appearance, *and colour* of the people. The elements of astronomy will consist in learning "a simple and natural method of getting to know the heavens"; various facts about latitude, longitude, climate, the moon, and the sun. The girls will be trained to resolve problems of the following nature: "Find the antipodes of Lima, a town in Peru." "On what day has the sun an altitude of 23° at midday in Amiens?" "What time is it in Jerusalem when it is 12 o'clock in Amiens?" "What is the length of twilight and dawn in Amiens on such and such a date?"

To these matters the girls of the upper division add practical map-drawing and the astronomical questions become harder to solve. "Determine what stars will appear upon the horizon of a given place at a given hour." "Find the age of the moon from its shadow. . . ." "Predict

[1] *Lettres Choisies*, vol. i, p. 56. [2] Ibid., vol. i, p. 371.

[3] Compare the interest shown in the study of geography by the nuns at St. Cyr. See especially the letters of Mlle. d'Aumale. In the early days of the Society of the Sacred Heart a geography class was given as a *treat* on holidays.

eclipses of the moon for the following year." After such scientific questions one is somewhat staggered to learn that the pupils of both classes can describe in French verse the four quarters of the globe, the characters of the people of the world, and the poetical parts of geography! It might be interesting to hear! This was the age of mnemonic poems, and even our schoolboys say such rhymes as "common are to either sex . . .," but when the assertion is repeated with regard to French history, one wonders! Father Loriquet was a facile poet. Perhaps this literature was from his pen?

Concerning domestic economy, for a realisation of whose utility the programme refers us back to the Romans, not many details have come down to us. Apparently these had been consigned to a supplement of the programme, now unfortunately lost. We are merely told that the girls have taken part in the material care of the house, each according to her age and capacity, and that next year it is proposed to treat the matter more systematically and from a theoretical point of view.[1] We have seen how the girls in the Abbaye-aux-Bois were associated with the household management. Without ever giving so much initiative to the pupils or taking up so much of their time, the new Society was to look upon domestic training as essential. The following paragraph, taken from the *Plan of Studies of* 1833, will show its outlook on the subject:

"Domestic economy will be looked upon as a necessary branch of education and no care is too great to form the

[1] The *Annuaire de la Somme*, mentioned above, is, however, most explicit. It says of the mistresses (whose names it gives): "Marchant . . . sur les traces des Dames de l'Enfant Jésus de Paris, elles s'attachent à l'Economie domestique et au travail des mains. Tout dans l'instruction est dirigé sur l'utilité domestique. On leur apprend en détail toute l'économie d'une maison bourgeoise. On les occupe tour à tour aux travaux domestiques. . . ."

pupils to it. The elder girls will be made to look after their own trousseau, that is to count their linen, to mend their clothes, to cut out and make up undergarments, dresses, etc. They will get an idea of laundry work by observing the preparations made for the house laundry. They will be taught how to wash crape, tulle, and other material, and how to use an iron. They must assist from time to time at the purchase of certain stuffs, of household stores, such as wine, oil, butter, vegetables, and dried fruit, of coal and wood. They will be made to pay bills and count money. They will be called in to see how fruit and vegetables are preserved for the winter. They will also be given some notions of cooking, at least as regards the making of cakes and the ordering of a dinner.

"The pupils must become acquainted with the times and seasons for planting and what trees to prefer. Nothing should be omitted that may train them in habits of order and economy which should be recommended in all things. The most essential point is to be able to render an exact account of the way in which one spends one's money. Consequently, as soon as the girls can write and count sufficiently well they will be given a little book in which to set down accurately, day by day, their receipts and expenses. These accounts are submitted every month to one of the mistresses, and from them, and not from the Econome's account book, they will draw up the statement which they send to their parents.

"The majority will have to write down: (I) What they have paid the masters who teach the various accomplishments. (II) What they have bought for their trousseau or for manual work. (III) Money given in alms. (IV) Any other expense, such as the franking of letters.

"From what has been said it will be clear that the pupils

will look after their own personal concerns in all the houses where this is possible ; thus they will pay their own masters, getting from them the receipt of the account. They will also pay any man who works for them.

"But to teach them to put order into all their affairs, their possessions must be examined frequently, for example, their desk or workbox. Negligence and disorder must be punished. In addition to the mistresses appointed for this duty, all must watch over this important point and must be careful as to the use of paper and pen."

These paragraphs, which might have been called Miltonic had Milton been interested in womanhood, breathe the very spirit of Fénelon.

In the same letter, in which Mother Barat is recommending writing lessons for a child, she uses two untranslatable words too closely bound up with French ideas to be omitted here : " Soignez bien son *langage* . . . je vous recommande aussi son *maintien*." If we render these words as "power of expression" and "manner of presenting oneself," we have given utterance to two preoccupations of the French school-world. These ideas will meet our little schoolgirl on her first entrance into the classroom, when, after a preliminary prayer, she applies herself gravely to *la récitation des leçons*. This is something more than a mere test of the more or less diligence with which the book has been studied. It is, indeed, a rhetorical exercise in style and manner. Standing erect and gracefully, the child must be prepared to give a three or four minutes' exposition of her subject. Obviously, she will help herself with the words of the book, thereby enriching her vocabulary and giving the mistress an opportunity of judging her grasp of the passage or of correcting faulty enunciation.

If our little schoolgirl falters, if her words come haltingly or her speech becomes indistinct, her neighbour will take up the tale, and she will sit down *désolée* at having lost at one blow her much coveted good marks, an opportunity of airing her knowledge, and a chance of using her powers of expression. These are, indeed, painfully held in check by the rigid silence customary in French schools, though they are trained, in appropriate times, with such careful attention.[1]

The study of the mother-tongue is enriched with all the experience inherited from ages of linguistic study. Grammar is taught more or less concentrically, and is accompanied by constant practice in composition and letter-writing. As a background to literary studies the younger children are to be told stories from mythology and to learn by heart much poetry of Boileau, Racine, and La Fontaine. A closer reading of such letters as those of Madame de Sévigné is to be a more definite introduction to literature.

Once this is begun we see the girls' curriculum approaching nearer to that of the boys, and we find ourselves once more under the mantle of Rollin. The first class is to be given "notions préliminaires du goût," that is, to consider the laws and basis of literary taste and to study in French classics what the test of time has passed as excellent and worth preserving. These writings are taken under four headings: epistolary, historical, poetic, and oratorical. Writings belonging to the first of these headings make the best approach to literature for girls who have been taught how to write a good letter. The second heading comprises narratives, whether true or fictitious. Poetry is now taken from an artistic and philosophical

[1] Compare with Part I, Chap. IV, what is said of the girls at the Abbaye-aux-Bois.

aspect; and for the study of oratory, both sacred and profane, the girls need a training in the elements of logic. They learn to recognise a correct argument, to criticise a syllogism, to draw up a clear demonstration. In this connection they study the technique of literature, figures of speech, and different kinds of styles.[1]

We find a Latin psalter and later a Latin grammar set down in the list of textbooks for all the upper classes. Mother Barat's practice, in early days, appears to have been to single out more specially gifted children for private lessons in this subject. As time went on a double tendency showed itself in the evolution of the curriculum. On the one hand, it seemed natural for the thorough grounding in French to pass on into an even more complete study of Latin; on the other hand, it merged equally well into a wide and cultural survey of literature, backed by the elements of philosophy which are the complement of such study. These two tendencies sometimes existed side by side, sometimes preponderated one over the other. When we remember the comprehensive training given in needlework and domestic subjects, we shall realise that already in the first years the syllabus is very full, and that the mistresses will find some difficulty in fitting it into the short hours of class.

Even now, they have probably been warned not to prolong unduly the time of recitation, which will be followed by the teaching of new matter. *Faire la classe* consisted of a clear methodical exposition, accompanied by illustrations, charts, maps, or diagrams done on a blackboard when there is one; if not, as with Mother de Charbonnel's geometry, upon the floor of the room. The exposition will be short, especially for the younger classes,

[1] Compare Part I, Chap. III, Rollin's Treatise on "Rhetoric."

and must ever be more of a dialogue than a lecture. It will sometimes be replaced by *une lecture expliquée* and will be followed later in the day by the oral correction of written work. Here again tradition is strong, and is probably reinforced by close contact with a boys' school. All the exercises must be carefully gone over, and corrected with the children. They should have been so prepared that faults are rare and subjected to severe criticism. Nor was the criticism to centre merely around the spelling and writing; for such an attitude spoils the teacher. One page should be corrected from that point of view, but, for the rest, the mistress was to try to penetrate to the heart of the matter, giving her attention to content, style, and personal thought.[1]

Outside the regular class hours there were periods of study when even the youngest learned to get on alone with some piece of work carefully explained to them. The necessity of paying attention to the explanation, and the independent work which had to be produced, was largely responsible for the solid character of French studies. Anyone who has watched the system which too often prevails in our English schools to-day, when the children remain all day in close contact with the teacher, perpetually asking for help and guidance, and never forced to think anything out for themselves, will understand the value of set hours of private study.

There were also long periods, generally in the afternoon, when all those not wanted by music masters or for lessons in other accomplishments did their needlework in company with two mistresses. The syllabus was wide and the standard high, little children often producing fine stitchery which nowadays would be considered bad for the eyesight. The

[1] See above Part I, Chap. II, "Methods in the Jesuit Schools."

teaching was largely individual or given to a group at a time by one of the mistresses, while the other gathered round her the remaining girls for "une conversation intéressante et polie." It was at these gatherings that the social life of the school was largely formed. Conversation was always preluded by some well-chosen reading, and when we are tempted to find in early plans of study a dearth of prescribed texts, we must remember these daily gatherings as well as the fact that meals were taken in silence to the accompaniment of some book of travel or some interesting biography. These supplied plenty of matter for conversation. Moreover, many of the mistresses, like Mother de Charbonnel, had had interesting experiences, and were sometimes to be coaxed into telling stories. At the approach of the great feast days the children would learn something of their history and spirit so as to be able to enter intelligently into the symbolism of their rites.

To the studies outlined above we must add half an hour's religious instruction, and the hours of walk or recreations. On ordinary days *balle-brûlée*, *balle-au-camp*, flags, and other traditional pastimes would group the girls round their mistresses in the convent garden, while holidays would disperse them all over the property in elaborately planned expeditions of *Chasseur* or *Cache-Cache*. It would be tempting to describe the intricacies of these games. The latter is not the mere haphazard "hide and seek" of the English schoolboys; the former is minutely described by Hélène Masalska in her diary, but neither must detain us here.

Neither must we linger over the details of school life, already so clearly defined and so easy to link up with the schools of the past. The fifty-one *pensionnaires* pay 600

francs a month,[1] and we know from confidences made later by Mother Barat that the nuns find it very hard to make both ends meet.[2] The ribbons worn by some of the girls are not merely distinguishing marks to show the class to which they belong, as was the custom in the schools of the Ursulines and at St. Cyr. They are badges of office conferred by the votes of the pupils and ratified by the religious. Already in 1805 Mlle. Dorothée Michel, of Amiens, has been awarded the first medallion and the first blue ribbon of merit, while blue ribbons are also given to Mlles. Peñaranda (of Bruges), Bruhier (of St. Dominique), du Haut-Plessis (of Paris), and Dottin (of Amiens). In the middle school the decoration given was the green ribbon, which at this date was being worn by Mlles. Corblet and de Sambucy.[3]

Here we must leave the silent, studious schoolgirls of Amiens and with the foundress look farther afield. In connection with other houses, and after considering the developments going on both within and without the Society, we shall have to discuss many other matters relating to school life. The strict discipline, the decorum, the social activities, the relation of mistresses and pupils are just as much part of the tradition as are the studies of any school, and have as large a place in the moulding of character. Still more so has the faith with its consequent ideals of life and conduct. The difficulty in our study will be not to narrow our outlook by considering too deeply one or two special schools, and yet, on the other hand, not to become guilty of the vague and superficial generalisations

[1] See *Annuaire de la Somme*, 1806.

[2] Unpublished souvenirs of Mother Perdrau tell us that they rose early to clean the girls' shoes and so save a small weekly sum.

[3] See *Annuaire de la Somme*, which also gives the prizes awarded in September 1805.

which come of sweeping views and of playing with statistics. This difficulty must, in some measure, have been that of Mother Barat herself, as numbers grew and the first happy personal intercourse with all her daughters became an impossibility. By keeping close to her we may perhaps get the best and truest idea of the Society which she founded.

Chapter IV

EXPANSION

"The 'Saints' of Christ, His 'holy nation,' fight here on earth, not with loud clamour or great display, but in quiet and stillness. Their wrestling is not against men, but against sin; they seek the pearl of great price and the hidden treasure. They . . . go their inconspicuous way of duty, and cannot marvel enough that the great and holy God should be with them also."[1]

Not for long could Mother Barat remain in Amiens to watch over the development of the school; for as early as 1804 calls were made upon her from many quarters, and when at last Father Varin urged her to accept the one that came from Grenoble, she set out for that city on a long wintry journey.

Philippine Duchesne, the daughter of a prominent citizen, had been a Visitation novice when the French Revolution broke out. Anxious now to place at Mother Barat's disposal herself, her monastery, and a few like-minded companions, she awaited her coming with ardent longing. But before relating the meeting of these two women so fitted to understand each other we may be permitted to look out, with Mother Barat's eyes, upon the country through which she had to travel, and to look down the years that lay before her.

Reconstruction was taking place all over France, and everywhere the Fathers of the Faith were doing pioneer work. At Beauvais, Abbeville, St.-Valery-sur-Somme, at Lyons, Belley, Roanne, Tours, Poitiers, and Bordeaux, they were giving missions. Fathers Varin, Thomas, Lambert, Gloriot, Enfantin, Barat, Roger, were preaching and founding good works. There were colleges at Marvejols, Bazas, and Belley, as well as near Lyons and Poitiers.[2] The

[1] *The Spirit of Catholicism*, Karl Adam, p. 99.
[2] See *Histoire de la Vén. Mère Barat*, vol. i, p. 134, Baunard.

very thoroughness of their organisation and their far-reaching activity stirred the uneasy suspicions of the Minister Fouché, who was already prejudicing Napoleon against them. In 1807, the year in which the Society of the Sacred Heart received legal approbation from the Emperor, the Fathers of the Faith, in spite of the remonstrances of Cardinal Fesch, were summarily disbanded. Their colleges were closed or else handed over to the clergy of their respective dioceses, and they themselves were obliged to live for some years in retirement until the re-establishment of the Society of Jesus enabled them once more to unite in religious endeavour.

Before their dispersal, however, they had helped in the reforming of many long-standing social and educational activities, and had brought about the foundation of a greater number of new ones. It was especially by the encouragement which they gave to new religious congregations, seeking by means of adequate and adaptable organisation, by a simple manner of life, and by a union of work with prayer to meet the special needs of the day, that the Fathers most signally served the cause of women's education.

It is impossible to draw up a complete list of the old foundations now springing into life again or even of the new congregations established during the century. Nevertheless, if we are to see the work of the Society of the Sacred Heart in its true perspective we must become acquainted with as many as possible of its fellow labourers, while at the same time we follow the development of government organisation.

Among the ancient congregations a foremost place must be given to the Ursulines, who were with quiet assurance facing a new world, with many a new method and changed

custom, but with the strength given by a long and happy history.[1] The Sisters of Notre Dame of Jeanne de l'Estonnac, and the daughters of the Holy Ghost, founded respectively in 1606 and 1706; the congregation of St. Peter Fourier, dating from 1597; the Dames de St. Maur, who as early as 1678 had had in Paris a Training College for religious teachers; the various congregations placed under the patronage of St. Joseph, all were regrouping themselves and meeting new conditions. So, too, were the Benedictines, the Trinitarians, the Sisters of the Visitation, the Sisters of St. Thomas of Villanuova, the Sisters of Charity, and the " Dames de la Retraite."[2]

Apparently these many Orders in no way sufficed to meet the need. The early years of the century saw the foundation of the Dames Bernardines at Lille, and the Sisters of Notre Dame (later called " de Namur ") at Amiens. This congregation was closely allied in its origins to the Society of the Sacred Heart, for its saintly foundress, Julie Billiart, shared with Mother Barat the friendship of Father Varin, and the two Orders grew up side by side until the day when the same interference that had troubled one institution forced the other to seek in Belgium liberty to develop along its own lines. At Lyons, Claudine Thevenet dedicated a congregation to Jesus and Mary; at Cherbourg, St. Madeleine Postel founded the Sisters of the Christian Schools; at Metz, Madame de Méjanes created the Institution of St. Chrétienne, while from a school kept by Madame Desfontaines during the Commune the congregation of Sainte-Clothilde took its rise.[3] Finally an Institute dedicated to the Sacred Heart and

[1] See *Histoire de Ste Angèle de Merici et de tout l'ordre des Ursulines*, Postel, vol. ii; also *Histoire de la Mère de Ste Ursule et des Ursulines de Boulogne*.

[2] See *Un Siècle de l'Eglise de France*, Baunard, chap. vi, pp. 116–21.

[3] See above, Part I, Chap. VII.

Perpetual Adoration was established at Poitiers by Father Coudrin.[1]

In the second decade of the century Amiens again sheltered a new teaching order, the Faithful Companions,[2] under the government of Madame de Bonnault d'Houet. This period saw also the foundation of the Marist Sisters at Ain; and of the Sisters of Christian Education at Echauffour. La Sainte Union was soon afterwards established by Father Debrabant. The Cenacle, which Marie Victoire Couderc founded at La Louvesc, provided retreats for girls and women.

The movement continued throughout the century, though naturally its pace slackened. Two congregations devoted to works of charity are deserving of special mention—the Little Sisters of the Poor, founded at St. Servan in 1839, and the Helpers of the Holy Souls, which Eugénie de Smet established in Paris about the middle of the century. But we must not include all works of social help and uplift, such as the Good Shepherd Nuns of St. Euphrasia Pelletier, or the list will attain to enormous proportions. The congregation of Notre Dame de Sion, founded by Father de Ratisbonne, of the Sacred Heart of Mary, the work of Abbé Gailhac, and of the Nuns of the Assumption, founded by Marie Eugénie Milleret de Brou,[3] must close the roll of names, a roll of honour, for they have done brave service.

But why, it may be asked, this multiplication of small

[1] In *Un Siècle de l'Eglise de France*, chap. x, pp. 207–8, Mgr. Baunard gives the list of all the congregations founded during the nineteenth century, and dedicated under one title or another to the Sacred Heart.

[2] In the *Life of Viscountess de Bonnault d'Houet*, Fr. Stanislaus gives an account of this society and of the splendid work it has done. The Salford Training College in Manchester and the school at Clarendon Square in London are perhaps the best known of its English houses.

[3] See *Mère Marie Eugénie Milleret de Brou*, Lady Lovat; also articles in *Les Cahiers Thomistes* for October and November 1933, where the intellectual level of the studies in this congregation is much stressed by R. Père Peillaube, S.J.

congregations, with their unfamiliar names and petty differences? Why not group all initiative into one or two vast systems whose clearly defined provinces will prevent overlapping and the ramifications of which will work harmoniously in the larger organisation of the *Code Napoléon*? Because the *Code Napoléon*, with its bureaucracy and soulless methods, is alien to the old tradition of France, which is nothing if not Catholic, and the worth of every Catholic entity lies in its *soul*. A religious order is a family, dealing with its members as living, sensitive personalities and not as chattels. Each congregation has its own peculiar soul or spirit, the outcome of its origins, of its history, of the character of its founders, of its aims, and of its work. The orders now springing up in France were founded for very various purposes. Recruited sometimes from special localities, they drew their members now from this class of society, now from that. In time, as each expanded, their activities would inevitably overlap, at least occasionally; a healthy rivalry would then ensue, and benefit all parties. They have much to learn from one another, for they complete one another, and yet their likeness is always deeper than their difference. When towards the close of the century an ecclesiastic who had had a long experience of schools and scholars praised in his life of St. Madeleine Sophie the education she offered to her children, singling out the qualities of elevation and solidity which, in his judgment, make it stand out with a character of its own, he added, as he looked round on other modes of education, that the actual studies adopted by the new Society were traditional and widely diffused: "Il n'y a guère là que ce qui s'enseigne et se pratique à peu près partout."[1]

[1] *Histoire de la Vén. Mère Barat*, Mgr. Baunard, vol. i, p. 387.

In the early years of the century houses were being founded almost at the rate of one a year, though in rhythmic periods of expansion and of brief respite. By 1808 Mother Barat governed six convents, at Amiens, Grenoble, Poitiers, Ghent, Cuignières (afterwards transferred to Beauvais), Niort. In the next seven years came trouble caused at Amiens by M. de St. Estève and Madame Baudemont. Then followed a period of consolidation when the constitutions were drawn up, and Mother Barat was elected Superior General, to her lasting grief. No new foundations were made, and one, Ghent, was lost to the Society by reason of political differences between France and Belgium.

After these years the movement of expansion is again visible. The studies of the Order are more firmly organised; the rule receives solemn approbation from Rome; the school in Paris, at the Rue de Varenne, begins, under Mother Eugénie de Gramont, a long and fruitful history.[1] In 1817 the first colony of nuns had gone out to America,[2] while at the same time houses were opened at Quimper, Chambéry, La Ferrandière, Bordeaux.[3] In 1823 the Society crossed the Alps and settled at Turin, acquiring five years later the beautiful old abbey of the Trinità dei Monti in Rome. Further establishments in Italy, in Switzerland, in Belgium (at Jette-St-Pierre), at Conflans (outside Paris), Tours, Nantes, Toulouse, Kientzheim, and Laval, at Nancy and Montpellier, were made before 1842, when foundations began in the British Isles with Roscrea (Ireland) and Berrymead, afterwards transferred to Roehampton. Farther afield were the new houses of Algiers, Lemberg, Padua, Sarriá (in Spain), and Blumenthal (in

[1] See *Journal de la maison de Paris*.

[2] *La Vén. Mère Philippine Duchesne*, Mgr. Baunard; also *Mother Philippine Duchesne*, M. Erskine.

[3] Wherever possible, an elementary school was attached to each Convent founded.

Holland), while all the time the convents in the States were multiplying with equal rapidity—St. Charles, Florissant, New York, Sugar Creek, McSherrystown, Manhattanville, and other houses existed before the middle of the century.

We must now go back to the year 1804, when, on December 13th, Mother Barat crossed the threshold of what was to be the second convent of the Sacred Heart, and received the deeply humble greeting of Philippine Duchesne.[1]

The milestones of Philippine's early life had been outstanding events in the history of France, and also of world history. Born in 1769, the same year as Napoleon, the child whose early prayers had been said in the Merovingian crypt of the church of St. Lawrence, or by the side of Bayard's tomb, had looked from babyhood upon the snow-capped heights which Hannibal climbed and had been reared upon the memories of heroic days. For up those mountains had passed also St. Bruno and his ever-living sons, setting their aerie near to the heaven which filled their thoughts; while on a lesser height, above her native town of Grenoble, St. Jane Frances de Chantal had established a snowy solitude, where her Visitation daughters once welcomed St. Francis of Sales. But if this birthplace of Philippine was indeed a land of solitary altitudes and smiling valleys, of snow-capped contours, changing in colour, yet firm in outline, it was no peaceful backwater. Already six years before her birth the Parliament of Grenoble, refusing to sanction the financial measures of the Government, had risen in revolt, and their leaders were Duchesnes and Périers.[2] Of these, Claude Périer, a successful banker, had bought the ancient château of the Dauphins, at Vizille, a place where, on the eve of the Revolution, the

[1] *Mother Philippine Duchesne*, Marjorie Erskine, chaps. i, ii.

[2] Philippine's mother was a Périer.

local parliament was again to defy the governor, the Duc de Clermont-Tonnerre.

In the interval between these two events the little Duchesne girls and their cousins, the eight Périer boys, grew up amid hard thinking, in the two forbidding-looking houses side by side in the Place St-André. Philippine was about seven years old when news came of the declaration of American Independence; and she heard much philosophical discussion of the rights of man, of liberty, and of justice. She heard, too, that there were priests who went out to this far country in quest of souls, and the first flame of missionary ardour leapt up within her as she listened to the account of their apostolate among the natives. Some day she was to go out herself to this far country, but for the moment her travels were only to take her up the mountain-side to the convent of Sainte-Marie-d'en-Haut.[1]

There, in a serene and lofty atmosphere she grew to know and to appreciate the meaning of religious life. Child as she was, and occupied with her little studies in history and geography, needlework and drawing, Philippine conceived a high ideal of an existence consecrated to God; for in her a vein of mysticism mingled with the Duchesne spirit and made her character a strange compound of fire and snow. Tenacious yet aloof, devoted yet detached, she could fight, but not in her own cause; could suffer, but would not be enthralled by anything less than the eternal. When her parents called her away to share for a time the lessons of her boy-cousins, she threw herself with enthusiasm into the study of Latin and algebra, competing in

[1] A description of this convent is found not only in the archives of the Society of the Sacred Heart, into whose hands it passed early in the nineteenth century, but also in those of the Ursuline nuns, who bought the property from Mother Barat about the middle of the century.

arithmetic with four future bankers ; but she left her heart at Sainte-Marie.

She was back here as a novice in 1788, but her father would not allow her to take vows, foreseeing the suppression of the monastic orders which two years later brought Philippine back to her home. Here, during the years of bloodshed, that is from about 1791 to 1794, she was characteristically wholehearted in her service to all in trouble. Hunted priests were hidden by her in her father's house. When they were caught and confined in Sainte-Marie, now become a temporary prison, Philippine visited and comforted them. When, in 1798, Napoleon, invading the Papal States, sent Pope Pius VI a prisoner through Grenoble, Philippine knelt among the crowds who did him homage.

She saw her uncle, Claude Périer, leave for Paris as a representative to the legislative body, and heard reports of his huge fortune, a fortune which was to make him one of the founders of the Bank of France. But no earthly riches could lure Philippine, and when her mother's death left her lands and money, she handed these over to her sisters and dreamed of the poverty of her mountain cloister.

Her father was also in Paris as a member of the Tribunate, in which, with Carnot, he strenuously but unsuccessfully opposed the life-consulate of Napoleon. Left independent by his absence and by the death of her mother, Philippine could give all her time to the good works which the signing of the Concordat in 1801 made increasingly possible. She opened a school for little vagrant boys, the most neglected section of the community ; and soon was being pursued by the demonstration of their tempestuous loyalty. When a relative, M. de Savoie-Rollin, fell ill, Philippine helped to nurse him back to life, and his wife begged her

to say what they might do to show their gratitude: "Ask your husband to help me to buy back Ste-Marie," was the unexpected answer. Soon, with the help of two cousins, Casimir and Scipio Périer, the now dilapidated building was acquired, and in December 1801 the ragged schoolboys carried up the mountain-side the few possessions which Philippine brought to her old home.

Her trials were, however, by no means ended, for her attempt to gather together the Visitation nuns proved a failure; poverty, criticism, and disappointment tried to breaking-point even her Duchesne power of endurance, but Philippine held on. The Fathers of the Faith came to know her, and one, Father Rivet, sent his sister as a companion. From Grenoble a few girls arrived as boarders; among them, Emilie Giraud, who soon joined Philippine as an aspirant for religious life. Father Rivet spoke of a like beginning at Amiens, and of Mother Barat and her first companions. Philippine longed and prayed for the foundress to come, and wrote in her own name and in that of her companions, whose numbers had now grown to six. At last Father Varin, after judging for himself, sent for Mother Barat, who, arriving on December 13th, knew that she had met a kindred soul.

Kindred, indeed, they were in aspiration and in generous disposition, though utterly different in temperament and in mental gifts; for while the young foundress was gentle and retiring, scholarly and prudent, though withal vivacious and full of humour, Mother Duchesne, outspoken and ready to dare all, was ardent and impatient of the minutiæ of scholarship. Too much in earnest to see the humorous side of life and of persons, hers was rather the stuff of martyrs than of pastors. She viewed all things on a great scale, and was ever ready to break through obstacles. As

Mother Barat gradually unfolded to her new daughters the ideals and spirit of the Society, Philippine took her words in their widest connotation and saw the possibility of carrying the Order into the New World. And even while she dreamed, Napoleon was selling to the United States his newly acquired colony of Louisiana, where, before long, Philippine Duchesne was to lead a band of nuns of the Sacred Heart.

It was a happy little household which now gathered round Mother Barat and eagerly learned from her lips the lessons of religious life; and these were halcyon days for the foundress, a fair seed-time for noble friendships and for still nobler hopes—a time for garnering memories that were to sweeten her whole life. She gave herself unstintingly to her new daughters and to the little school, singling out the most gifted, as was her wont, not for special favour, but for adequate training. Among these and far surpassing them all came, in 1805, Mother Duchesne's little niece, Euphrosyne Jouve,[1] a singularly charming child whom the foundress was to love very dearly.

To the Duchesne tenacity of purpose and high spirit little Euphrosyne joined a deep piety and a refinement of feeling that quickly softened and matured her ardent nature. Sometimes in her first years of school the little niece would find her will clashing with the unbending command of her aunt, and anecdotes that have come down to us give dramatic episodes of the classroom. Puerile as they may seem, two of these are worth recording here because of the light they throw upon the studies and upon the clear outlook of this little scholar. On one occasion Mother Duchesne summarily ordered Euphrosyne, then

[1] *Notice de la Mère Euphrosyne (Aloysia) Jouve.*

about thirteen years of age, to make a reduced copy of a large plan of Rome. The girl quietly declined, alleging that she had no grasp of *the principles upon which such work was founded.* The aunt insisted, the niece remained obdurate, and it needed some tact on the part of the Superior to safeguard authority while in heart she sympathised with the objection. On another occasion, a message was brought to Euphrosyne in church to intone a certain motet, this duty falling to her as leader of the school choir. "I cannot," she answered, "as I do not know the compass of the piece, and I would probably take a wrong note."

Euphrosyne was only a very little girl when Mother Barat first arrived at Ste-Marie-d'en-Haut. We soon find her studying Latin with the Superior, and she must have made rapid progress, for although she was taken from school unusually early to help her mother with the care of younger brothers and sisters, she was reading Virgil, Homer, and Dante in the originals, and was showing much promise for music and for all kinds of needlework. But her heart was in the old monastery, and as soon as possible she was back there as a novice, only to die some six years afterwards at the age of twenty-four, leaving Mother Barat the memory of a daughter, "ainsi que je les avais toutes rêvées," the child of loving training, gentle, gifted, ardent, and mature.

These days could not last long. Letters were calling Mother Barat afield and, moreover, she was wanted back in Amiens. She was anxious now to begin to draw up the constitutions of the Society, and to conduct the election of the Superior General. Hitherto the foundress had been acting as Superior under obedience to Father Varin, but he wished now to withdraw his authority and to allow the members to manage their own affairs. On January

18th, 1806, the first General Congregation of the Society was held in Amiens, the nuns from Grenoble sending their votes in writing. Already some dissension was beginning to show itself in the house at the Rue de l'Oratoire,[1] but Mother Barat was elected by one vote. Her deep distress would have been all the greater had she known that she was to carry the burden until her eighty-sixth year. She remained in Amiens some time, closely following up the progress of the school and, still more, that of the novices, who were becoming numerous. In May 1806 she returned to Grenoble, establishing Mother Deshayes as Superior; for she herself must leave before long for Poitiers, taking with her one of her Grenoble novices, Henriette Girard, a person of mature age and wide experience.

Here again Mother Barat lived many happy days, and here again we may learn much of her outlook and of the training she gave to those who became her daughters. She can still have living, personal contact with these, and so we would fain linger and watch her at work in the novitiate of Poitiers.

[1] See Part II, Chap. I.

Chapter V

THE TRAINING OF THE EDUCATOR

"What training is there compared to that of the Catholic nun? . . . There is nothing like the training which the Sacred Heart or the Order of St. Vincent gives to women."—FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.[1]

IT is a significant fact that one of the best-known paintings of St. Angela Merici, the foundress of the first Teaching Order for women, represents the Saint surrounded, not by children, but by her ladies, collaborators in her work, who are eagerly listening to her counsels.[2] It would seem as if the artist realised that by far the gravest problems which an educational Order has to face are those concerning the training of its subjects. The Ursulines, inheriting the "Counsels" of St. Angela, had developed them in their "Rêglemens," as we have seen above. To their experience Mme. de Maintenon owed much of the wisdom apparent in her educational writings. The Jesuits had elaborated an effective organisation for the preparation of their scholastics. Mother Barat was now to face the same problems on her arrival at Poitiers.

Hitherto most of the women who had joined the newly founded Society had been personalities formed already by years of searching experience in the school of life, bringing with them the culture of their home or of a peaceful convent. At Poitiers two ladies were now offering to hand over to Mother Barat the old monastery of Les Feuillants, together with the small school which they had gathered within its walls, but to these two persons was soon to be joined a bevy of young girls whose education had suffered sadly during the troubled years of their childhood. Enthusiastic, ardent, and docile, this little band

[1] From a letter to Cardinal Manning, June 1852.

[2] In the church of St. Afra, Brescia.

from Bordeaux, with Thérèse Maillucheau as their leader, were ready for anything that might be demanded of them, but had received scant schooling in the France of the early nineteenth century. Henceforth Mother Barat would have to organise the studies of her young religious upon some settled plan.

It is impossible to follow in detail the development of this organisation, which was beset with many difficulties from the first. Want of subjects and an abnormally rapid expansion due to the urgent educational need of the country made settled training for long years a difficult task. The preparation of teachers for their life's work is one of the battle-grounds of the scholastic world[1]; even to-day we hear sounds of warfare from university and training college, and from every type of school. An International Order has to face external hindrances and to adapt itself to widely differing types of regulations, and yet must build up a settled policy of its own. Moreover, a double training is needed for the nun who devotes herself to a life in which prayer and educational work both find a place; hence the need for long and patient preparation in the face of many obstacles.

Mother Barat early sent for Mother de Charbonnel to help her with her novices. From the diary she kept during those years at Poitiers, and, still more, from her letters, we get an idea of her close and personal contact with her daughters. Thus we early find her corresponding on educational subjects, now playfully reproaching Mother Emilie Giraud for her spelling, "which would disgrace an Algonquin," and her writing, "which is inferior to the

[1] See *The Training of Teachers in England and Wales during the Nineteenth Century*, R. W. Rich. Cf. *Madame de Maintenon and Saint-Cyr*, p. 145, where Dr. Barnard points out that the establishment was both a school and a training college.

cat's"; now arranging quiet hours of study for one daughter and forbidding another to sit up at night; now instructing Mother Adrienne Michel how to ground her niece, Sophie Dusaussoy, in Latin, complaining that she "is not pushed on fast enough, and this under pretext of her health. Her writing is not much better than it was two years ago, and she makes the same mistakes in spelling. Her style is careless, showing no connection between her sentences, the content of which could be expressed in ten lines. If I were consulted I would ask for her to be urged on faster, especially for Latin. At her age I was quite as delicate and yet I had to work properly. The essential point is not to require long hours of study, but to see that she uses well the time at her disposal."[1]

A wealth of material illustrating Mother Barat's methods of training may be gathered from her early letters to her daughters, and from those written in her later years to the Superiors on whom she lavished all her care. Debarred by the extension of the Society from that close immediate contact with all its members which had formed one of the deepest joys of early days, Mother Barat, like St. Angela Merici, devoted herself especially to the formation of those who would in their turn train others, and thus she established an individual and permanent educational tradition amidst all the vicissitudes which delayed development or made necessary, at one time or another, a change of policy.

To study the plan or ideal of training as conceived by the Society of the Sacred Heart will then be of more practical interest than to follow minutely the story of the development of that plan. We must, therefore, leave Mother Barat in the peaceful solitude among the novices at Poitiers, in order to look down the century and farther afield.

[1] *Letters*, vol. i, January 25th, 1813.

The formation of the aspirant to religious life begins on the day on which she enters the novitiate, the moral and spiritual training which she there receives serving to develop, pacify, and harmonise the character, and so to make it at once more ready to profit from further teaching and more fitted to educate a younger mind. Very real, indeed, is the power of assimilation and of influence of one who has made a great choice and is content.

Intellectual work of an absorbing or of a purely secular character is not given to the novice until the second year of her training, and then for not more than three hours a day. The point of this restriction is to give freer scope for spiritual growth and to avoid distracting, by some passing interest, the mind intent upon the serious question of vocation. The noviceship is primarily a time of silence and of prayer, of self-conquest and of self-control, but it is also a forcing ground for right self-development, and it offers wide possibilities for mental growth. Scriptural, doctrinal and liturgical study, Latin (at least in so far as it is necessary for the recitation of Office), French, the official language of the Society, the history of the Church and of the Order, in themselves form no meagre curriculum. If to these we add the wide reading so familiar a feature of convent life, the training in manners at an age when youth most desires to shake off control, the constant companionship of older people, the opportunities for artistic work and for the exercise of a craft, the experience gained in household duties in apprenticeship to the nuns who have the care of the offices in the house, we shall see that a novice's training goes far to realise the aspirations of many colleges to-day, and gives scope to the great range of vocational interests that is always to be found among a body of women.

Herein lies, indeed, one of the gravest difficulties in the teaching of nuns. For whereas in the Society of Jesus the young man is made to pass immediately from the novitiate to a further two years' course of academic study, it has been found in practice that neither a rigid programme nor such a long period of preparation can be imposed upon all women alike. Whenever the question has been discussed, the wisest opinion seemed to be that, for the majority of nuns, some contact with life becomes a necessity after the two or three years of early formation. Women need more vitally than do men the stabilising effect of responsibility such as comes from the contact with the homely realities of life, or the direct fulfilment of their apostolic vocation.

The juniorate, as this period of training is called, continues a course of study begun in the second year of noviceship, with the difference that some six or seven hours can now be given daily to study. In the words of a nun who was for long mistress[1] of the juniorate: "Its aim is the same as that of the Society itself. It seeks to glorify the Sacred Heart of Jesus by the perfection of each of its members. Care should be taken, therefore, that the intellectual work to which the young religious devote themselves, far from hindering their interior life should serve rather to increase and strengthen it. Study is, indeed, most conducive to peace of soul, for it produces forgetfulness of self. It helps to keep thoughts upon a high plane and even enlarges the horizons of the supernatural world, for anyone who knows how to seek everywhere for divine beauty, divine goodness and divine truth."

[1] Mère Marie Lesage—notes written in 1915, largely drawn upon for the writing of this chapter.

The scope of the juniorate may be said to be moral, academic, pedagogic, and practical. Its moral effect may be judged by the above quotation; academically, its aim is in the first place to give some broad general culture (or to develop this for those whose education is already well advanced); secondly, to establish knowledge upon a philosophic basis; thirdly, to put the young nun, as far as possible, in possession of the subjects that go to make up the content of the junior and middle forms in the school. Above all, the juniorate is meant to be a time of mental formation, where intellectual defects may find a remedy. There, minds given to over-analysis are led to make synthetic judgments; the superficial are encouraged to penetrate below the surface; those wanting in mental initiative are deterred from seizing upon every passing opinion. A certain amount of pedagogic training is given by means of observation, model lessons, criticism, and study of educational psychology, while, where possible, the school textbooks form the basis of the course. This does not mean that the work of the nuns in training is not to rise above schoolgirl level, but that the mastery of the facts to be taught is considered an element of simple justice. The "juniors" are made to collect and to co-ordinate their facts into a synthetic scheme, to probe the foundations upon which these facts rest, to trace the connection of cause and effect, and to consider the best method of presenting the matter to a child. In France, and in most Latin countries, the ideal has always been for the class mistress to take all the subjects of her form. In English- and German-speaking lands it has been found necessary to introduce the degree of specialisation compatible with wide and general culture. It may be appropriate to insert here a letter showing the opinion of the President of Marygrove

College, Detroit, Michigan, upon the subject. Writing to the mistress-of-studies of the Albany vicariate, he says that the best secondary schools in the States are turning away from a policy of specialised departments and establishing again the form system which the Society of the Sacred Heart is known to favour. The writer continues: "What the reformers are all now striving for—somewhat blindly, however, in many cases—is mental *formation* rather than departmentalised *information*. This objective, especially the harmonious development of a student's power of thought and expression, has been the aim of instruction in all your secondary schools throughout the world, and experience has proved that this end can be achieved far more successfully by teachers who have been trained, as all of yours have been, to the mastery of such cultural powers for themselves. The inevitable tendency to narrowness, restricted outlook, and premature specialisation on the part of departmentalists cuts at the very roots of this balance and poise and breadth of mind. The depth and range of training to which your teachers are subjected in your international organisation has for generations demonstrated that it is quite feasible to equip a secondary school teacher with attainments, in *all* the essential high school branches, quite as full and effective as the isolated specialities of teachers in American departmentalised schools. . . . I am certain that the products of departmentalised schools, *ceteris paribus*, can rarely compare with the finished product turned out under the system that has grown out of the rich traditions and world-wide experience of the Society of the Sacred Heart." [1]

After this preliminary general training, which it is hoped

[1] Letter from Geo. Hermann Derry, March 16th, 1931, from Marygrove College, Detroit, Michigan.

will keep the beginner from elementary mistakes in the classroom, the young nun is generally entrusted with some teaching carried on under the supervision of the mistress-of-studies, who at the same time guides the development of her academic work. By safeguarding some hours of daily study, by procuring private tuition or correspondence classes, by means of summer-schools and even by those larger gatherings which lately, in some countries, have brought together members of many teaching congregations, the world of scholarship may be opened before the student, who in the quiet and silence of an ordered life may find no small scope for developing her gifts. Moreover, the fact that under such circumstances the nun is not cut off from the normal interests and responsibilities of her Order, not kept for years upon the outskirts of life, may make her scholarship, though one of slow growth, all the more fruitful. Some further study of educational psychology, of method and especially of philosophy, is meant to crown the years of academic work, as the teacher's diploma is taken in England in the post-graduate year. In this country the nuns may take this diploma from Roehampton, which was for years affiliated to the Cambridge Syndicate for the Training of Teachers, but they can also follow courses at St. Charles's Training College, Kensington, or St. Mary's College, Newcastle, or, again, they can attend the Froebel Classes at Hammersmith. The Society's official course is given in the second or upper juniorate.

Before going on to describe this, however, we may perhaps linger for a moment in order to compare with other methods of training that outlined above. During those middle years of the nineteenth century when the Society was discussing the question and trying experiments, the training colleges and training departments of every country

were coming into being. The rapid methods of Bell and Lancaster gave place to the first dreary days of the London colleges. Miss Burstall, teaching in 1882 in her old school, the *North London Collegiate*, submitted to training after taking a mathematical degree in Cambridge, and to-day advocates this procedure, namely, first specialisation in the university, and then a professional course carried on concurrently with work in the school.[1] Miss Buss preferred mistresses who had had a post-graduate year in a training college. To-day opinions show more and more variety. Some advocate a narrow but complete course, including one academic branch and professional study; others ask the impossible, and attempt to get into a short period a wide cultural education and a deep psychological formation. Others again, despairing of producing a finished article, undertake to teach the would-be teacher *how to learn*, and thus to send out students who will know how to complete their own education. At least one training college principal asks quite definitely that students in training should go over the matter which they are to teach, and should master thoroughly the textbooks which they will put into the hands of their pupils. The Society of the Sacred Heart is concerned with giving both accurate, if limited, knowledge of the curriculum and enough professional training to ensure efficient work in the classroom. If with that the beginner has some wide general culture, has learnt how to pursue her study independently, to use books and to think for herself; if, moreover, she has learned in the juniorate those details of school management that ensure the smooth workings of an educational establishment, those habits of order, method, punctuality, despatch, discretion, con-

[1] *Retrospect and Prospect*, S. Burstall, p. 93.

sideration, so important in a monastic school, she will be able to develop rapidly and according to her individual bent.

A second juniorate was established in France at the close of the last century, for the purpose of gathering together specially promising subjects for a period of study before their final probation. Nuns from French-speaking countries still meet in the French house-of-studies for a course which includes scholastic philosophy, contemporary history, and literature, as well as mathematics and artistic subjects. The aim of these studies is rather to foster unity of thought and aspiration than to cover a definite amount of matter. In this French juniorate ties are formed for life. The nun who has passed through it will feel henceforward that she has a place to turn to when she needs intellectual guidance. Perhaps some day it will be possible to give this gathering an international character where teaching is given by some of the best minds from different countries. In the present state of educational policy this is, however, hardly to be expected, and, at present, each vicariate has to provide for the higher studies of its members.

The last stage of training, obligatory upon all, is the probation, or six months' noviceship, spent at the Mother-House in Rome. Here the young nun finds herself one of a group of forty to fifty religious who come from all over the world, and she will learn to think of herself as part of a great whole. French is the official language, making possible the intercourse of this great cosmopolitan household. There, completely free from all cares of school work or study, the nun looks back upon her years of religious life, looks out upon the world of her Order, of the Catholic Church, of God's Kingdom, looks right on to the limits of Eternity, for she is to bind herself *for ever*. And

yet she knows well that not even yet has she finished her training.

From the above sketch it will be easy enough to realise the many problems which arise even around the *theory* of education, but when one considers the practical difficulties which impede the realisation of the best theories, then, indeed, one may be tempted to discouragement. When ill-health, want of subjects, political unrest prevent the nun from receiving the proper formation in her early years; when the laws of the totalitarian state refuse to allow freedom of initiative and make the obtaining of diplomas such a difficult matter that only the few can hope to succeed; when the difficulties attached to pedagogic studies isolate some members apart from the community and shut out the less academical-minded from any participation in the work of education, for which they also may have their gifts; when sectarian spirit and even persecution drive the nuns from their homes, then the life of an international Order seems threatened on every side. Yet it would seem that it is by means of its international character that a Society such as that of the Sacred Heart will find stability and the means of solving, or of rising above, its many problems.

It is abundantly clear what an important position is that of the mistress of the second juniorate, and what a mark she may leave, not only upon individuals, but also upon the studies of the whole Order. We can gather reminiscences to-day from those who look back with gratitude to the days of their training. Of Mother Durand, who in the 'seventies and 'eighties saw many generations pass through her hands, it has been said that her virile philosophic teaching left an indelible impression. Her clear and convincing mathematical lectures had a way of taking flight

into the abstractions of metaphysics to the delight of her students. She was a good Latinist and a woman of wide literary culture, who gave to her nuns, and through them to the schools of the Society, an education that was eminently reasonable; reasonable not in the sense of the practical wisdom that Madame de Maintenon established at St. Cyr, but reasonable because based on clear logical principles that afforded a moral criterion for every act. The girl who did wrong "knew that she was a fool" and knew how to rectify her error. The nuns were taught how to handle adolescents, and were encouraged to develop growing powers by means of beautiful literature, to meet the difficulties of the age by the principles of sound philosophy. Self-control, self-determination, self-development came from this education of the reason, and marked the generations that came under Mother Durand's influence with the stamp of strong personalities.

Reverend Mother Nerincx, Superior first of the convent of Conflans and then of Ixelles, played an important part in the organisation of the second juniorate, and passed on many of her ideas to Reverend Mother Marguerite Lesage, who had assisted her in her constructive work, and who later developed and widened the course of studies for the juniorate in France by calling in outside lecturers and adding to libraries and science rooms. Reverend Mother Lesage carried on the studies and the traditions to Rivoli, Turin, and Jette during the days which preceded the War. She was succeeded by her sister, Reverend Mother Marie, who for long years during and after the War continued the work of formation and adaptation. Her personality remains impressed upon many leading figures in the Society to-day. Nuns to whom she taught her doctrine that "natural perfection forms the most stable basis for

supernatural virtue"[1] used to find in her "a world of order, of poise, of wise optimism, and of serenity." She liked to view things in their most luminous aspect, and taught her juniors to do the same. She used to say that to be solidly reasonable was the best preparation for being thoroughly supernatural. The balance of the human personality is the first stage of the reign of God in a soul. It was her constant preoccupation to make her students realise the intimate connection between intellectual development and moral or spiritual growth.

The second juniorate for nuns from French-speaking countries is now in the old monastery of Marmoutier, near Tours, on the site hallowed by the labours of St. Martin and his disciples, whose caves and ruined chapels still line the face of the cliff. It is an ideal setting, an old garden with avenues of gnarled trees, the river Loire running smoothly just beyond its boundaries, the ancient towers, gateways, and arches speaking of past worship and of an ordered life.

The fruit trees bloom with yearly splendour at Marmoutier; peach, cherry, apple, and pear blossom outlined against a background of grey-green stone form a picture symbolic of the eternal youth which year after year projects its powers against the age-long traditions that endure. Overhead, in the blue sky of Touraine, the sun beats down upon this spacious loveliness, bringing the blossom to fruition, and herein, too, lies a hidden meaning. For if mental space be necessary for those called to a life of reflection and to somewhat lonely study, so, too, is sunshine, the light and warmth of encouragement, of confidence and guidance, which are the most maturing forces upon earth.

[1] Private Records of the Society.

Chapter VI

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CURRICULUM

"We must preserve that union which is our strength, a union resting upon the singleness of our aim, upon agreement as to principles and upon the essentially religious, philosophical and literary character of our education. . . . If we want to accomplish our task, we must remain ourselves."

THESE lines, written by Reverend Mother Stuart in a letter of 1912, are quoted in the introduction to the latest edition of the Society's *Plan of Studies*. They may be said to form the theme of this chapter.

From its origins the Society of the Sacred Heart presented itself as a definite entity, having as a Teaching Order a personality conscious of its aims, its methods, and its principles, preoccupied about the consistency and continuity of its action.[1] Spreading rapidly and coming to maturity in a time of change and of new educational developments, the Order might have contented itself with merely multiplying schools which would each meet the needs of its particular locality and take therefrom its characteristic features.

That nothing was farther from the intention of the foundress can be seen from her private correspondence, from the letters which she was accustomed to send out from time to time to the whole Society, and from the various editions of the *Plan of Studies*. Traced first in a manuscript draft dating from the first days in Amiens, this plan appears already in coherent shape in the printed programme of 1805,[2] is drawn up afresh in 1820, amplified and reprinted again in 1833 and 1850. In the 'sixties, and again in the

[1] In her early letters Mother Barat frequently asks the nuns to copy the Rules and Syllabuses and send them to a new foundation. See *Lettres Choisies*, vol. i, p. 35 (To Mother Duchesne).

[2] See above, Chap. III.

closing years of the century, it is reissued. Finally, in 1922, a modern edition offers to the whole Society a new expression of the spirit underlying its teaching and a practical guide for its studies in the widely scattered schools.

Before endeavouring to trace the evolution of the plan of studies, however, we must consider briefly some of the landmarks in the history of education in France during the nineteenth century.[1]

In the early years the first Napoleonic regulation withdrew all recognition from private secondary schools for boys, except in the case of those, such as St. Acheul, which included sufficient aspirants to the priesthood to justify the claim to be called *petits séminaires*.

At the head of the new system, the Grandmaster exercised universal control through 27 academies or university centres; by 1813, 250 *collèges communales* had been created and 33 *lycées*, the former being provided and largely maintained by each commune, the latter having their site and buildings from the communes but being maintained by the State.

In 1828, under the Restoration, a Ministry of Public Education was created, its president being also Grandmaster of the university, which thus became a State department. It was only in 1833[2] that every commune was obliged to provide free, compulsory schooling for boys.

In 1850 the State monopoly was abolished in matters educational, and *La Loi Falloux* came to reward the efforts of the Catholic Party led by such men as Lacordaire and Montalembert. A period of expansion followed with the wide increase of the number of State and private schools. Then was inaugurated an age of greater religious liberty, but an age also of minute and bewildering scholastic

[1] See *Comparative Education*, Sandeford, pp. 289–90.
[2] Ibid, p. 313.

regulations. It was in 1852 that Fortoul could complacently consult his watch and exclaim: "At this hour, in all France, boys are working through a Latin version!"[1]

This is the age of time-tables, marks, registers, and statistics, when the pupil's daily progress must be tabulated and sent to headquarters, so much so that one exasperated pedagogue is credited with an entry for the six days of one week: "Des progrès incessants, extraordinaires, inouïs, incroyables, stupéfiants, renversants!"[2]

The first primary training colleges were established by the Government in 1879, when each different department had to provide one, while higher normal schools were also established in various places.

State secondary schools for girls were founded only in 1880, fifteen years after Mother Barat's death. These schools resembled the boys' *lycées* in organisation, administration, inspection, and the appointment of teachers, though there was, from the first, a difference in the studies and in the diploma given, which was easier than the *baccalauréat*.[3] The teachers for these establishments were trained in the normal school of Sèvres. Obviously this late development of State schools for girls left much scope for private enterprise, while it also fostered a habit of independent and sometimes isolated activity which had its drawbacks and its advantages.

It must be remembered that Mother Barat in early years

[1] Cited by Georges Weill, *Histoire de l'Enseignement secondaire en France*, 1802–1920, p. 140.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 142.

[3] The State schools for girls still have a definitely feminine programme, for the mistresses hold the *Licence de Sèvres*, originally planned on feminine lines. By a strange anomaly, however, the Catholic schools have to adopt the boys' programme, as, owing to sectarian spirit, they cannot hope to get a candidate accepted at Sèvres, and are thus obliged to take the *baccalauréat externally* under the same condition as boys. This is what is done, for instance, at "l'Université libre de Jeunes Filles," conducted by Madame Danielou in Paris.

witnessed the unjust treatment of the Fathers of the Faith; later she was to see the school of St. Acheul closed through mere anti-clerical prejudice, and to live through three or four revolutions in France and one in Italy, applying now to one short-lived ministry, now to another for legal recognition.[1] She enjoyed the favour and the patronage of many influential persons, but it was no wonder if she felt little trust in the permanence of political institutions. Strong in the confidence and approval of those whose children she and her daughters were educating, it was but natural that she should, on the whole, have guarded with anxious care the independence of her schools. Moreover, she was not forced to seek the outside contact which external examinations would have made necessary, for the French parent was usually very indifferent to university diplomas for his girls. The reason for this attitude must be sought in the social customs, the philosophy, the religion of the nation. Holding, as they did, clearly defined views on the position of womanhood, a position compounded of dignity and independence, the French parents, however modest their means, ranked among their first duties that of providing a suitable dowry for their daughter and of taking an active share in guiding her choice of life. Dignity must then be given to a girl by means of an education in manners, taste, and ideals, an education which is significantly expressed by the French word *élever*,[2] since it implies the ennobling of the whole person. The independence desired for a woman was not the fruit of a successful career, but rather the right and peaceful self-reliance of a mind which carried within itself resources for its own happiness and healthy

[1] See *Histoire de la Vén. Mère Madeleine Sophie Barat.*

[2] On this subject see p. 13 of K. Anderson's translation of Mgr. Dupanloup's *The Child.*

occupation; and a character so much at peace with itself that it need not seek for excitement abroad. France already in the early nineteenth century was suffering from the overcrowding of clerical professions and the neglect of agricultural and commercial careers.[1] It would hardly have welcomed the entrance of women into this congested field of activity.

The tradition of voluntary and independent action was, therefore, to give a thoroughly feminine culture along the lines of the past, but one so adapted to modern requirements as to prepare the way for specialised studies when in some exceptional case these became necessary or desirable. Comparison with the State schools, so summarily created, often soulless and without character, made convent education more attractive to most parents.

Nevertheless, such an attitude plainly had its dangers, and Mother Barat was alive to them, as may be seen from these lines of a letter, issued to the whole Society in December 1845. After deploring the fact that the standard of studies and of teaching methods has fallen somewhat, the foundress adds: "People are complaining that we do not push on our children; that many lose ground under our care; that mistresses are generally behind the plan of their class. . . . Mothers brought up with us compare their instruction with that received by their children, and discover a marked difference." The foundress here comments in detail upon the complaints which have come to her ears, and asks that the standard of scholarship and of teaching should be kept at a high level. She insists especially on the care which should be given to the younger classes in the school, in order to ground the

[1] See Demolins' *A quoi tient la Supériorité des Anglo-Saxons*, where the rush for clerical professions is deplored.

children solidly.[1] Some instructions follow on measures to be taken immediately for preparing and helping the mistresses, and then the letter continues :

" While waiting to realise a very necessary project, the forming of a *juvénat* (a training department) for our young aspirants, we are adopting the measure of sending out one or two religious, chosen from the most learned, to visit the houses and examine the level of the studies. They will be, as it were, our inspectrices, and if this task is accomplished with the earnestness and the devotion which should animate our work, the confidence of parents will be restored." [2]

Owing to political difficulties the *juvénat* was founded only some twenty years later. It was to Mother Barat's successor, Reverend Mother Gœtz, that the task fell of revising the plan of studies and of gathering together, first into a *juvénat élémentaire*, and then, after some years of teaching experience, into a *juvénat supérieur*, as many of the

[1] Mother Barat always showed a marked interest in the education of the younger children, a fact which comes out specially in Mother Perdrau's reminiscences, where the intercourse between the foundress and the junior school at the Rue de Varenne is delightfully portrayed.

[2] With this letter of the foundress we may compare the following report made by the prefecture of the Seine in 1845 concerning the education of convents : " Of the twenty-five religious establishments which, in the department of the Seine," says the document, " offer higher studies to girls, the greater number are but pious creations (*sic*) and works of charity. But eight or ten are outstanding (*hors ligne*) as regards the strength of their studies. Thus we have the houses of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Rue de Varenne, of Notre Dame de St. Augustin, dite des Oiseaux, Rue de Sèvres, of Ste. Clothilde, Rue de Reuilly, of the Mother of God, Rue de Picpus, of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary, and of the Perpetual Adoration in the same road, of the Holy Child, dite de St. Maur, of the Nuns of the Assumption, Rue de Chaillot, etc. In these schools are taught all the subjects laid down by the minute of March 7th, 1837, reading, writing, arithmetic, French language, rhetoric, logic, literature ancient and modern, history, geography, cosmography, natural history, geometry, experimental and applied physics, modern languages and accomplishments. In some institutions it is the nuns who teach all the subjects, even science and modern languages. In others outside masters and mistresses are employed." (This is quoted by Gréard in *Education et Instruction*, vol. i, p. 135.)

young nuns as were to work in the schools. The whole Society (now spreading ever more widely in different lands) was to feel the benefit of this measure, but the French houses were not long allowed to enjoy their prosperity. Ever since the establishment of the *lycées* and *collèges* for girls the State had been aiming laws against the congregations, hoping, by fiscal oppression and tyrannous interference, to drive them from the field of educational work. Some people, even at the time, put these measures down to the insufficiency of the studies in convent schools, but a close consideration of the facts clearly refutes this judgment. The measure may, indeed, be said to have been dictated rather by jealousy at the very evident superiority of many Catholic teaching bodies, and of the hold they had upon the affections of the country. No distinction was made between colleges yearly obtaining splendid university results and obscure convents bringing up girls in complete seclusion. Jesuits and Christian Brothers shared the fate of the smallest congregation of nuns.

This is not the place, however, to give a detailed account of the measures which were to close over 1,500 religious houses in France. These measures, dictated by narrow and violent anti-clerical spirit, are hard for Englishmen to understand, accustomed as they are to welcoming voluntary initiative with a wide-minded appreciation.

In the 1820 edition of the *Plan of Studies* the traditional subjects are enumerated,[1] but one can see that the content has developed. With Fénelon, Madame de Maintenon, Racine, and Rollin, the Order continues to lay stress upon the mother-tongue, giving a setting to the study of literature by supplying that indefinable background of history, mythology, and etymology.

[1] See above, Chap. III.

The history syllabus has, indeed, become more modern in outlook, national history being given a prominent place. The geography course has been restricted. Although apparently based upon scientific principles, it tends more and more to be correlated with history.

Literature, properly so called, is only to be begun when the pupils have enough grasp of their own language to be able to exercise taste and discrimination. The importance given to the French language has made even Latin an adjunct, nor are foreign tongues apparently much cultivated during the school course. The better plan is thought to be that of sending the girls to complete their studies in a convent abroad.

In the *Plan* of 1833 little change appears, except that one gathers that academic studies are demanding more time. A charming paragraph on the value of dancing has been replaced by two somewhat grim lines which state laconically that "as far as possible, lessons in deportment will only be taken during recreation hours." Later, however, the earlier view was to prevail.

In 1850 three significant additions are made: foreign languages, and also natural history and general knowledge, the last two obviously showing an approach to science. The literary and philosophical bias is again made plain, and good translations of classical and foreign literature are recommended for the elder girls.

At this time in the Society, as in the world outside the convent walls, a burning question was that of the advantages and disadvantages of specialist teaching. Mother Barat makes known her decision to the religious in these words: "Several of our houses have expressed a wish that different branches of study should be taught in so many groups or divisions (each by a specialist). After careful

consideration this proposal has been unanimously rejected, on the ground that without achieving the results it might seem to promise, it would rather destroy what is in reality the most important factor of our mode of education. I speak of the unbroken influence of a mistress-of-class, a true religious who with zeal and enthusiasm makes full use, under the direction of the Superior and of the mistress-general, of the various branches of the curriculum, in order to secure the chief aim of our education, the moulding of the minds and hearts of our children."[1]

It was about the middle of the century that Mother Barat established the office of "mistress-general-of-studies," entrusting it to Mother d'Avenas, one of the most learned women the Society possessed. Under her guidance was published a series of *Manuals* or *Readers*, two or three for each class, wherein were collected literary extracts, stories, and miscellaneous information, chosen to form a background to the studies. These books compare favourably with the textbooks of the time, and some were used to the end of the century.[2]

So the last years of Mother Barat's life saw some quiet development. When she died in 1865 she left eighty-four houses scattered throughout France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Austria, Spain, Poland, England, Ireland, the States, Canada, and South America. It may perhaps be a matter of surprise, in view of this wide expansion, to see how the curriculum had developed in early years upon French lines. If, however, the list of houses be carefully considered, it will be seen how, for many, French was the normal language.

[1] December 13th, 1851.

[2] The manuals ran through several editions and have been re-edited in the last ten years by Mame at Tours. The present edition forms a complete *cours de style*, covering the whole period of school life. It is used in the French-speaking houses of the Society, and also by some girls learning French in other countries.

Moreover, so great was the prestige of French education that in several countries the nuns were encouraged to keep their schools almost entirely French in character, and thus to offer to girls an advantage which they would otherwise have had to seek by leaving home. Thus, for example, in the convent which was founded at Roehampton, London, in the middle of the last century the studies were, in early days, conducted almost wholly in French, and the pupils were practically bi-lingual. Such a policy, while it retarded the normal development of the school along national lines, certainly helped to build up the special character of the Order. Probably the English, German, Italian, Polish, Spanish, or Japanese schools of the Society, schools which to-day have entered into the trend of thought of their respective countries, owe something to that long period of growth under the tutelage of a great tradition.

Although State schools for girls were not to be established before 1880, already in 1867, two years after the death of Mother Barat, Victor Duruy was to open courses which should prepare girls for the examinations of the Sorbonne and for teaching diplomas. That inspection would soon no longer be avoidable was becoming obvious to all, the necessity of preparing girls for examinations beginning to be dimly perceived. Above all, the need for a solid grounding in the elements of philosophy was made imperative by the blast of rationalism which was blowing at the time.

Reverend Mother Gœtz, successor to Mother Barat, was fitted by character and upbringing rather to hand on a tradition than to create anything new. Endowed with a deep spirit of reverence and a tenacious loyalty, she was essentially the right person to guide the Society in the critical period which was bound to follow the death of the

foundress. The first years of her government marked a period not only of consolidation but also of experiment, but it was experiment conducted from the centre with a certain fear of private enterprise. The syllabus of the older girls is expanded and deepened, philosophy and literature are again given the first place, but opinions are invited as to how scientific subjects may best be treated so as to arrive at solid, useful, and practical conclusions while avoiding pedantry.

Under Reverend Mother Lehon, third Superior General, came the first move of the university towards the monopolisation of secondary education of girls. All private boarding schools for girls were considered as primary schools, though by establishing regular supplementary courses they could continue to keep pupils up to seventeen or eighteen years of age. The mistresses-of-classes in these boarding schools were to be in possession of the *brevet simple*, the head-mistress had to have the *brevet supérieur*.

It was a simple matter for the nuns to sit for these examinations, but the event was a landmark; from henceforward convents would have to enter more definitely into the national system. But not, however, in France, at least in the beginning of the twentieth century; on the contrary, anti-clerical laws closed forty convents of the Sacred Heart, driving the religious from their houses.

After the general congregation which followed this suppression and the opening of numerous new houses throughout the world, Reverend Mother Digby wrote: "The exigencies of the different countries in which we have establishments force us to certain divergencies in our *Plan of Studies*. It becomes necessary to give more time to modern languages and to science, although we must at the

same time preserve for our teaching that literary and lofty spirit which should always distinguish it." The Superior General reminded her daughters of the modifications made by the Jesuits in their education, while at the same time they continue to draw their inspiration from the *Ratio Studiorum*. A wave of new life seemed to sweep over the Society as it rose above the calamity which had befallen it, and proved the strength of its central government and the loyal spirit of every member. The French nuns dispersed in distant houses brought to all a precious help which made new developments possible.

In England the religious were encouraged to study for degrees; the training college founded at Wandsworth in 1874 entered upon a new era after its transfer to St. Charles's Square, North Kensington. A foundation in Japan opened up a fresh field and a very new horizon. The training college in Peru saw further developments, so did Manhattanville in New York, while the boarding schools in many places developed markedly.

In 1911 Reverend Mother Digby was succeeded, as Superior General, by Reverend Mother Stuart, author of *The Education of Catholic Girls*, which she wrote as Superior of the English Vicariate, as well as of the book *The Society of the Sacred Heart*.[1] To Reverend Mother Stuart the time seemed ripe for expansion, and she read a deep significance into the events which had transplanted so many members of the Society and had opened as many doors as it had closed. From the temporary home of the Mother-House in Brussels she started on a journey round the world, acquiring a first-hand knowledge of all her convents, studying, observing, planning for the future that seemed to hold so much promise in store. But the war of 1914

[1] See Chap. II above.,

followed her return to the Mother-House. Within its first few months she died, leaving to her daughters an unconquerable spirit of hope which seems to have been her special gift, a hope that found fitting expression in the one document which she had written about the studies. "Exterior uniformity is indeed no longer possible in all countries, but we must preserve that union which is our strength, a union resting upon singleness of aim, upon agreement as to principles, and upon the essentially religious philosophical and literary character of our education. Methods of teaching can and should be constantly perfected; we must take into account the tendencies of that modern world which awaits our pupils when they leave school; we must arm them for a struggle to which they were not, formerly, exposed, and we must keep in the front rank, as a preparation for life, that education of the Society of the Sacred Heart which was left us as an inheritance by our Blessed Mother. The task is not as simple as it was in the first years. We must study more deeply, think, judge, examine, foresee more than was necessary before our time. In many countries we have to win our right to teach; but in the midst of all examinations, diplomas, and certificates, if we want to accomplish our task, we must remain ourselves."

Reverend Mother Stuart reminds her daughters that the studies are in state of flux. There is no new plan since the days of Mother Gœtz; after experiments have been tried, the whole matter will be reopened.

It was only in 1922, under the government of Reverend Mother de Loë, a German, elected to succeed Reverend Mother Stuart, and who had now finally established the Mother-House in Rome, that a General Congregation was able to meet at last and to consider the needs of a changing

world. The office of mistress-general-of-studies, not being of any practical utility amid so much diversity, was suppressed, and to each Mother Vicar was entrusted the care of organising and supervising the studies in her vicariate, of appointing the mistress-of-studies who should supervise the work of all the houses, and of calling a vicariate council every three or four years. But in order to maintain as far as possible uniformity of outlook on fundamental subjects the *Plan of Studies* was re-edited on modern lines such as would be suitable for French-speaking schools. To them it is to be considered of obligation, and everywhere else it is to be a standard and a guide. It enshrines that age-long and ever-living tradition that had come down through centuries of Catholic education, and is easy of adaptation in different periods and different climes.

In conclusion, we may perhaps consider the significance to-day of the religious, philosophical, and literary character of this education, and we may quote from the latest edition of the *Plan of Studies*.

" Education is a work of progressive development. It assists the inborn capacities of the child in their earliest efforts, enlarges their field of action and strengthens them. It stimulates the activities of the soul, inspiring enthusiasm for great things, and in general it may be said to bring about that harmonious unfolding of nature which is favourable to the action of grace.[1] . . .

" The kind of study which develops the whole being and helps to train minds which in the end will be of greater worth, seems to need more latitude in the choice of subjects studied than is possible when the programme of an examination has to be completed within a given date. It requires also, and even, perhaps, still more urgently, a

[1] *Plan of Studies*, p. 2.

habit of personal independence in work and an atmosphere of calm."[1] . . .

"In these days, which are marked by so much want of thought, so much sophistry and error, some elementary knowledge of philosophy is indispensable to strengthen the Faith, the reasoning powers and the character of our children. . . . The introduction to the course is generally made with the study of logic. . . . This has an immediate utility for the time of study, above all in the Senior classes, in which the reasoning faculty is so much exercised. Logic should be treated simply. Subtleties which weary the attention and burden the memory without profit for the mind, should be avoided. Stress should be laid on the necessity of the formation of judgment. The children might be practised usefully in searching for varieties of reasoning in the course of a written speech or argument, or they might be asked to prove a thesis or to refute an error in syllogistic form. The great idea of truth is one of the chief points of this study."[2]

The course in philosophy includes some elementary notions of general metaphysics, cosmology, psychology, natural theology, and ethics.

"With regard to psychology, the mistress should make frequent appeal to the personal experience and to the power of reflection of the children so that they may see that their perfection in the natural order consists in the rational and ordered development of their powers. They will also realise that since the fall of man this work of development is subject to the law which governs all human existence; that of effort through which we grow and gain the noblest joys of this life and are guided towards our eternal destiny. . . .

[1] *Plan of Studies*, p. 12. [2] *Ibid.*, pp. 37-43.

"The study of Natural Theology widens still more the horizons of truth—and shows in God the ideal of all perfection. . . .

"The principal business of ethics is to determine the meaning of moral obligation, and of such concepts as *right* and *duty*, responsibility, sanction, merit, virtue, all of which are of primary importance in the conduct of life. . . .

"The children should be given some knowledge of their legal rights and duties. Even in his day Fénelon deplored the great ignorance of women on this subject which is of such practical and daily utility." [1]

In the chapters on literary and historical studies the *Plan* points out the training of mind and character, of imagination, judgment, emotion, and right conduct afforded by these studies. Indeed, every branch of the syllabus is considered from the point of view of the mental discipline which it affords. Without holding extreme views on this subject the Society of the Sacred Heart has never abandoned the belief in the possibility of some kind of formal training. It has always tried by means of suitable exercises to develop the inherent capabilities of a child. Hence it has set value upon the formation of good mental and moral habits, on external discipline, and on an environment conducive to study. There is no point about which the friends of the Order have commented more favourably than this mental discipline which comes largely from the philosophical course, however elementary and unpretentious this may be. Whether we call it *la philosophie* in France or *Lebenskunde* in Germany, whether it be studied by students in an English training college or by American undergraduates, it is everywhere one of the most salient characteristics of the education of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

[1] *Plan of Studies*, pp. 44 to 46.

A few lines on this subject by one who takes a special interest in Manhattanville College, New York, will form a fitting conclusion to this chapter on the evolution of the curriculum:

"What I believe to be the most important work done in the College is the training got through the full course of philosophy, a course which is obligatory to all students, and includes logic, psychology, ethics, sociology, and natural theology. . . . Girls know how to *think* when they have passed through this training—they pick out the fallacies that 'get away with it' in politics, economics (to a certain extent), and are not influenced like the multitude by catchwords and slogans which take the place of reason in most forms of propaganda that lead the unthinking crowds." [1]

[1] Letter to the author by the Reverend Father F. Woodlock, S.J., March 6th, 1936.

Chapter VII

MEMORIES

"In every respect I am simply what College at Eton made me. What am I fighting for? . . . for about a hundred friends and a few acres of elms and turf by a river, for red-brick buildings and a grey chapel and, above all, for the most tremendous tradition I shall ever know."[1]

OLD traditions have many shrines, in walls and trees and playing fields and in the hearts of friends. Moreover, where they live they are dynamic, working into energy the courage to fight and the will to endure. Since this is so, three pictures will be given here, memories of days gone by, for they will show more clearly than any analysis the nature of school life in a convent of the Sacred Heart.

1. *L'Hôtel Biron, Rue de Varenne*, Paris, formerly the residence of le Maréchal Louis-Antoine de Gontaut-Biron, became in 1820 the property of the Society of the Sacred Heart.[2] The house, standing in the midst of a garden planted with stately trees, made a dignified setting for a school which was to educate throughout the nineteenth century girls from the foremost families of France.[3] A study in contrasts might be made of these demure convent maidens flitting in and out of their gilded classrooms, distinguished in manners but simple and hardy in mode of living, sitting down contentedly to the bare tables of their refectory, with that scorn of the merely comfortable which is part of their racial

[1] Letter from the Front, written on November 30th, 1915, by an old Etonian and quoted by Eric Parker in *College at Eton*.

[2] Louis XVIII gave a generous donation towards this property at the request of a novice, Madame de Marbeuf, widow of the former Governor of Corsica and friend of Napoleon.

[3] The journal of the house in Paris, kept since 1820, gives the history of the school with the exception of a few years in the middle of the century, whose record was lost.

inheritance. It is not merely because they know that the nuns, their mistresses, live in the attics and the stables of their convent homes that they themselves accept without comment the scant comfort of their surroundings, but because such plain living seems to them and to their parents the right setting for a life of study.[1]

In the Amiens of 1805 we have seen how the outward organisation was closely akin to that of the convents in pre-revolutionary France; but the details of the daily routine, the ribbons, the uniforms, the silence, the games, and the household duties enshrined a spirit which had also come down with unbroken continuity from the past.[2] If one can trace in the life at the Rue de Varenne the most important elements that went to make up the education of the convents of the *ancien régime*, one may feel oneself entitled to call these memories an *Essay in Continuity*. These elements may be considered one by one.

First and most fundamental, the Catholic spirit stands out as the very *raison d'être* of convent life, the religious motive and the religious point of view ordering every detail into a system founded upon a common faith, a common hope, a common love. It is hardly necessary to state that this Catholic element permeates the life, the constitutions, the activity of a Society dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Christ our Lord. Moreover, because the Order is *Catholic* it has a wide horizon, keeping in closest touch with the Roman pontiff, opening its doors to every

[1] "Ich glaube es nicht, das ein Volk sich von Grund aus verändert haben kann, wenn es an seinen Wohnstätten, seinen Strassen und Parks so wenig geändert hat . . . nicht sein Wohnen macht den Pariser konservativ; sondern er ändert nichts an seiner Art zu wohnen, weil er der Konservatiste aller Menschen . . . und wenigen *novarum rerum cupidus* ist als irgendein anderer (*Die Moderne Französische Literatur und die Deutsche Schule*, V. Klemperer, pp. 69, 70.)

[2] A charming picture of the school at the Rue de Varenne is given by Mgr. Baunard in *Histoire de la Vén. Mère Madeleine Sophie Barat*, vol. i, p. 428 et seq.

kind of good work, free schools or orphanages,[1] sodalities, retreats,[2] sending out missionaries across the ocean and helping them by every means in its power. Far-reaching preoccupations envelop the world of school and dwarf into insignificance the petty trivialities that might so easily absorb it. We hear how the girls were now presenting to a member of the Royal family the coverlet they have "magnificently embroidered," [3] now showing the school to a savage chief from Sugar Creek, who comes with his small daughter to tell of the land whither Mother Duchesne has gone to labour.[4] Sometimes the girls may catch a glimpse of old Madame de Genlis pouring out her views and reminiscences of the world of education. Who had ever a wider knowledge of it than this woman whose career began as a *Governor* to the children of France and ended as *Dame d'Inspection* under Napoleon?[5] Another pathetic figure was the old Duchess de Bourbon, mother of the Princess Louise de Bourbon-Condé, who had once dreamed of attempting the work which now has become a reality. Great men are also to be met at the Rue de Varenne and succeed one another down the years—Mgr. Frayssinous, Grand-master of the University, Montalembert, whose daughter was to enter the Society, Lacordaire, le Père de Ravignan.

[1] An orphanage was founded by Mère Eugénie de Gramont for the benefit of children whose parents had been victims of the cholera. It was afterwards transferred to Conflans.

[2] Many famous preachers gave retreats at the Rue de Varenne, both to the school-girls and to Parisian ladies. The most renowned was Père de Ravignan. *Journal of the Paris House.*

[3] Entry for November 19th, 1820. *Journal of the Paris House.*

[4] *Journal of the Paris House*, August 27th, 1827.

[5] *Mémoires sur le dix-huitième Siècle et la Révolution française*, Madame de Genlis. See specially vol. iii for her education of the Royal children (*circa* p. 98) and vol. vi (*circa* p. 48) for her appointment as *Dame d'Inspection* made by M. Frochot. From these garrulous *mémoires* it is easy to imagine the nature of Madame de Genlis' conversation and of her never-failing fund of interest in matters educational!

It is no wonder if the coming and going of such personages, the varied topics of conversation, the dignity of the very building, should have given to the girls of the Rue de Varenne that quiet distinction of speech and manner of which Hélène Massalska grew to be conscious in her Cistercian abbey long ago.[1] And as the child in the eighteenth-century convent realised how much the influence of her mistress-general told upon her companions, so too did Mother Barat understand what an important post she was conferring when she chose the mistress-general of her Parisian school.[2]

Small, frail and insignificant in appearance, Mother Eugénie de Gramont was, nevertheless, the person most fitted for the position. The early years of her childhood[3] had been spent partly in Germany and Italy, but chiefly in England, where her mother, formerly lady-in-waiting to Marie Antoinette, had been forced during the days of the Revolution to open, near Hyde Park, a small school patronised by George III.[4] It was therefore from the Duchess de Gramont that Eugénie had received the education which was to make her so precious a recruit when together with that heroic woman and with her younger sister she devoted her life to God in the Society of the Sacred Heart. A contemporary writer could say of Mother Eugénie that:[5] "All those who met her were struck with the gentle dignity that belonged to this frail woman, who had made the accomplishment of duty the motive power and the one object of her life. A sound judgment swift to arrive at the

[1] See above, Part I, Chap. IV.

[2] Compare Madame de Maintenon's idea of the duties of a mistress-general *Lettres et Entretiens*, I, 306; also *Règlemens des Ursulines*, article II.

[3] Article on Madame Eugénie de Gramont by le Vicomte de Francheville in *Le Correspondant* for March 25th, 1847, the year after Mother Eugénie's death.

[4] See article mentioned above. [5] *Ibid.*

truth in any situation made her concise and very telling in speech. This gift of seeing intuitively the solution to the most complicated problems gave her a peculiar characteristic of serenity in the midst of the many activities which filled her life. One of her outstanding qualities seems to have been her truly exquisite simplicity. Hers was a nature born to command, because she had the gift of rendering obedience lovable. . . . It is no wonder then that when the question of the education of women was recently debated in our legislative assemblies, a well-known deputy made it his business to seek information from the keen intelligence and the consummate experience of Madame de Gramont . . . and that, struck by the depth and penetration of her views, he expressed his admiration in enthusiastic terms."

After praising especially Mother Eugénie's Congregation of the Children of Mary, a sodality established on the lines of that known in Jesuit schools such as St. Acheul, and one which was destined to bind past and present pupils together and keep them in closest touch with one another and with their old school, the writer points out how much Mother Eugénie did for the studies of the school in Paris.

Enough, however, has been said elsewhere about the studies of the first convents of the Sacred Heart, so we must resist the temptation of taking a glance into the classrooms, where, as we can easily learn from the manuals, much general information goes hand in hand with literary training—*ideas* and *words* being supplied together to these alert little Parisian girls. We might, if we so wished, find the third class poring over architectural diagrams, and the fourth interesting themselves in the roads and bridges of France. The girls in the fifth class could tell us (and how many have heard this before?) the names of the kings,

the Terrace of the House of Commons. There Theresa and her twin sister spent many happy hours, wandering in and out of groups of Members of Parliament careful to behave with becoming propriety and reserve, so as not to disturb them in their conversation.

Mr. Neill, so his daughter relates, was an enthusiastic admirer of Frenchwomen, considering them to be the best-cultured in the world. For this reason he sent his three eldest daughters to Amiens, having heard of that school from a Jesuit Father staying in London. His boy was at the Jesuit College, yet the three girls had the cruelty to write home week by week: "Send us the twins," and thus it was that after a preliminary trial, during which their mother remained in the convent with them, Theresa and her sister, aged five, were enrolled among the one hundred and sixty boarders.

For the first two years the little English girls were made to live a kind of nursery life apart, lovingly mothered by every nun in the community and lionised by a number of distinguished persons outside. They were invited to "dine" at the Bishop's Palace, and for this occasion were encouraged to choose their own *toilettes*. With light blue silk frocks and long curls hanging down their backs they set out, therefore, but enjoyed themselves only moderately, so overwhelming had been the injunctions for perfect behaviour and *bonne tenue*. Monsieur le Préfet followed suit with an invitation, and there were other distractions, but the chief event of those early years was the fire which broke out during the night in an adjoining building.

Mother Theresa describes the evacuation of the junior dormitory by the host of sleepy maidens, quiet, perfectly disciplined and unafraid. And "Where shall we put the twins?" someone asked. "In my bed," answered the

Reverend Mother,[1] so thither, into the precincts of the community, they were conveyed.

Indeed, until their seventh birthday the twins were allowed the freedom of the whole house, of which they were in very truth the children, wandering round to the different nuns, one of whom made Theresa a little habit which she was proud to wear, though her twin would have none of it. There is a picture of Mother Barat's last visit to Amiens in the summer of 1857 when the twins were six and a half years old, the whole household gathering round the Superior General with the same love and devotion as in the first years of the Society.

On that occasion there was a holiday, *un congé sans cloche*, at "La Neuville," the country house just outside Amiens, with its farm, orchards and vegetable gardens disposed in the way known in Northern France as *hortillons*, that is, patches of vegetables surrounded by water armlets from the Somme. In this country place were found old-fashioned walks bordered with flower beds, while a little wood of elms and beeches surrounded "the Mountain," a magnified mole-hill, which made an excellent out-of-door theatre. To this came Mother Barat: "small, thin, with olive-tinted complexion, quick walk, rapid and expressive gestures, a gay laugh and a way of holding her cross in her hands on her breast, as she is represented in the pictures." And as she watched the play Theresa Neill sat at her feet, leaning her head against the knees of the Saint.

In connection with "La Neuville," Mother Theresa relates an incident which brings out the friendly relations between the nuns and their pupils. It was on the occasion of another *congé sans cloche*, that is, a day free from the

[1] Reverend Mother d'Oussières.

restrictions of school rules or bell, a day of liberty given to games and social intercourse, on which, according to tradition, there was to be no punishment or reprimand, and no child was even to be interfered with unless it were absolutely necessary. It goes without saying that the code of honour demanded loyal response and irreproachable behaviour, but for once the river Somme, gliding past the bottom of the garden, proved an irresistible temptation, all the more so as the gardener's boat, clean and inviting, was moored beside its banks.

River expeditions were strictly forbidden, but Theresa and a few companions took up their places in the boat one by one: " What fun to return to Amiens by water or to float down to St.-Valery and be advertised for!" Just as the girls grasped their oars a pleasant voice rang out: " Going boating; any room for me?" and Mother Antonia Frey, mistress of the highest class, something of a celebrity and very awe-inspiring to these " middle-aged " schoolgirls, stood before them. There was not a trace of disapproval on her face, so in a minute they had made room for her, and soon the whole party was floating down to the boundary of the convent property. There Mother Frey suggested calmly that by rowing hard they would be just back in time for *goûter*, and so they were; and the adventure ended happily without any further references, but with a new feeling of gratitude and respect in the hearts of all the girls.

To get into Mother Frey's class, *la classe supérieure*, was the goal of every girl's ambition. There the school rule acquired a pleasing elasticity—one might dress one's hair as one pleased and one might wear a crinoline daily indoors, a coveted privilege in the 1860's. Studies were arranged according to individual choice, and so from every point

of view, as Mother Theresa remarks, the status of the top class was an eminently attractive one.[1]

To this status, however, Theresa Neill was never to attain, for after telling of many incidents of school life, when the high spirits of the English family made the French mistress-of-discipline bemoan with horror " le débordement du Nil," and finally led the Superior to suggest to their father the transfer of his eldest daughter to the German convent of Montigny, her reminiscences finish abruptly with the account of the epidemic of cholera, which claimed several victims among the nuns in Amiens and led to the immediate closing of the school. " So at 10.30 one morning, we found the mistress-general waiting for us in the study-room. In a few very serious and earnest words she told us that by decree of the municipal authorities all the schools were to be closed, and that we were going home every one of us that very day. Such a scene followed, the younger ones jumping for joy, the elder weeping at this manner of leaving for good, the majority seriously concerned at the anxiety and sorrow of the Mothers, albeit far from realising the gravity of the situation."

So the Neill family said good-bye to Amiens, and in small groups the school broke up. It reopened after a short interval, but nothing further can be added here to this brief picture, the value of which consists in the fact

[1] We can compare with this statement René Bazin's remarks on " La Classe Blanche," which is the top form in *Le Monastère des Oiseaux*: " Cette dernière année est employée à juger philosophiquement tout ce qui fut jusqu'alors enseigné à l'élève. Le programme dépasse même en ampleur la philosophie des collèges de garçons. Si ' La blanche ' est confiée à une religieuse de grand mérite, d'intelligence forte et hardie, comme il arrive le plus souvent, on ne saurait croire le bien qu'en retirent les jeunes filles. Je le sais pour l'avoir vu . . . confirmer en elles le goût de la raison, de la clarté, de la langue pure et solide, de ce qui dans la poésie et la prose continue la France, et commande l'admiration d'une âme . . ." *Un Monastère de Saint Pierre Fourier*, "*Les Oiseaux*," p. 198.

that it gives a first-hand account of school life in a convent nearly eighty years ago.

The next scene opens in the convent at Pau on the evening of June 5th, 1887.[1]

In the assembly room of the convent of the Sacred Heart, the elder girls are gathering together for the yearly literary contest, known by the name of "Jeux des Roses." Founded in 1879[2] after the model of the historic "Jeux Floraux" of Toulouse, this institution has done much to establish in the school a high standard in matters literary. As a rule, five different kinds of roses are awarded for efforts in the *genre épistolaire*, *genre historique*, *genre philosophique*, *genre poétique*, or for "une œuvre dédiée à la Sainte Vierge,"[3] but to-night only the first and the second *genres* will be represented, as the candidates are younger than usual. They form a graceful picture in their pale blue uniforms,[4] the spacious gardens,

[1] These details are supplied by Comtesse de Balincourt, née Louise de Thury, who was present at the scene. To her the writer is indebted for her *Souvenirs*, and the essay: "Blanc et noir ou gris!"

[2] By Reverend Mother de Pichon.

[3] The neighbourhood of Lourdes gave the convent at Pau a special atmosphere, expressed in the name by which it became known: *La Maison de l'Ave Maria*.

[4] The following notes on some of the uniforms described in the annals of various convents of the Sacred Heart suggest an interesting study.

Amiens. 1800–1820. Bleu foncé à la Vierge. Petit bonnet de velours à trois pièces et fichu blanc croisé sur la poitrine (pour les promenades).

Quimper. Robe amarante. Spencer en velours vert. Chapeau galette en paille d'Italie. Ridicule noir au bras.

Amiens. 1835. Robe vert d'herbe. Ceinture violette à boucles. Collerette blanche. Chapeau de paille d'Italie garni de rubans blancs. Pantalons jusqu'aux pieds.

Perpignan. Robe vert pré en napolitaine. N.B. Les poches étant défendues on portait son mouchoir dans un petit sac noir.

Perpignan. 1843. Robe grise, garniture noisette ou marron. Frileuse en soie noire, garnie d'une dentelle. Voile de gaze verte à la Chapelle.

Jette. Avant 1860. Hiver. Robe brun acajou ou vert perroquet. Été, robe grise ou rose à mille raies.

Turin. 1892. Robe sang de bœuf à trois plis.

These details were published in *En Famille*, the publication of the Belgian Vicariate in September 1928.

seen from the French windows, making a background of pines and oaks and cypress trees that stand out against the majesty of the snow-capped Pyrenees. Some of the girls wear the traditional ribbon of merit, others carry across the right shoulder a piece of soft golden drapery kept in place by a rose of the same colour. This is the mark of distinction in former contests. Already the *Mainteneurs des Jeux*, part heralds, part judges, are ushering the thirty or thirty-five competitors to their places. The Superior enters, followed by the mistresses of the upper classes, one of whom, Mère de Flaujac, rises to pronounce the opening speech.[1]

In a manner half poetic, half humorous, the speaker criticises first in general, and then in some detail, the literary efforts which have been produced during the month of May. Three roses are presented to budding letter-writers, graceful little trees that stand on ebony sockets and disclose a Rosary. The first prize goes to a letter on " The Colour of Life"; the second to one whose title " En l'Air " conceals a " philosophy fallen from the roof"; while a third is awarded to a letter purporting to be from a father to his daughter, and described as *un tour de force*.

So entertaining are the short appreciations made on about a dozen letters and on some eight or nine essays that we cannot but regret that on this occasion of which the record has come down to us, the writers should have been limited in their choice of subject. The comments are incisive, pithy, suggestive. One letter-writer is told that her facile pen betrays, in spite of a certain fluency, a mind unable to convince another. Simplicity and good taste are

[1] Mère de Flaujac is known in the Society for poems and for musical compositions. Her life has been published together with that of Mother Perdrau, the artist, in a volume entitled : *Le Chantre de l'Enfant Jésus et le Peintre de Notre Dame*

commended. Failure to choose the right word is pointed out; as when a girl is told that "it is not at the foot of the Pyrenees that one can venture to speak of the *summit* of the jasmine"! Pious platitudes are reprobated and so too is *le goût du mignon* which fills a single page with "a *little* garden, a *little* corner, *little* buds and *little* bouquets"! It is excellent training in good writing, and one can understand how it was that the girls entered into their contest heart and soul. No stronger proof can be given of this than the fact that nearly fifty years after the evening here described, the writer could obtain from one candidate a copy of Mère de Flaujac's speech, and from another her prize essay.[1]

This was entitled: "Point Rose n'est la Vie," and gives the young philosopher's opinion that life is black and white or grey. Laying down as a premise that she wishes to speak of the realities of life and not of any fictitious dream, in clear forceful words she draws her analogies and conclusions. "... Dear friend, the fact that sombre hues enter abundantly into life is a matter of experience which none will deny.... Notice, indeed, that if, by chance, Almighty God forgets to mix these dark tints for us, we, by creating imaginary sorrows, mix them for ourselves...."

But the white spaces of life may be painted with good colours or with a spurious mixture. "I call white, the joyful, the tender and charming things of life, all the happiness with which God has willed to embellish our existence; all that makes us grow and develop and puts a smile upon our lips.... To mingle much white with

[1] One can see clearly how this method continues the tradition of the Jesuits and still more of Rollin in the matter of teaching rhetoric and composition. See Part I, Chaps. II and III.

the dark hues of life, to soften sorrow by putting into it much of heaven, this is the secret of painters in grey."

One would be tempted to quote more from this letter and also to include some passage from the composition of the English girl [1] who at an earlier date won the golden rose. Pau gathered together at this time several well-known English families, most of whom sent their daughters to the Sacred Heart. Two other English girls are commended on the evening here described; the one because "si la langue est encore en friche, le cœur est en pleine culture"; and the other because "c'est seulement par accident que sa plume, devenu très française, se laisse aller à quelques ressouvenirs d'outre-manche."

The convent clock has been striking "les quarts et avant-quarts"; at the lodge, chaperons are waiting for the day-boarders. The chapel bell, *Bernadette*, is calling the nuns to office, so the assembly breaks up. Some of the older girls wander out through the rose-covered porch into the inviting garden, where the air is full of a hundred different scents. Darkness is falling over the old "Villa" and over the new, white school-house, and is blotting out the view of the long alleys and of the Carmelite convent beyond. Sounds come up from the town, reminding the girls of the many points of contact it has with their peaceful home.[2] The mountains, growing now into huge, mysterious darknesses, have at their feet, Lourdes, that place of wonderful associations.

The impressions left by these schooldays were to be

[1] Louise Maunsell.

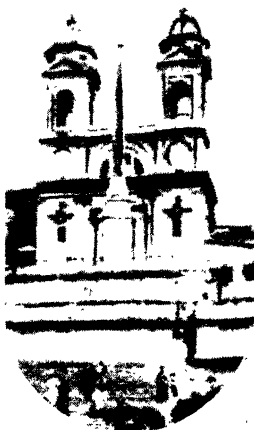
[2] The convent in Pau was the centre of many good works for rich and poor. The ladies of the town came for sodality meetings, to work for the poor or for the missions. There were frequent retreats. Several associations, pious or otherwise, grouped working girls or the mothers of the children who frequented the free school.

thus recorded by one of the pupils, forty-seven years later[1]: "As I near the end of life's journey, I understand more fully the nature of the training we received, and what pains the nuns took to develop in us true piety and all our gifts of mind and heart. . . . Sometimes the nuns would say to us: 'We are teaching you to *learn* for yourselves later on.' Nevertheless, they managed to send us away with a considerable sum of knowledge. . . .

"The affection that the old children bear to the nuns of the Sacred Heart is well-known; but in no convent has it ever been more faithful, more living, more enduring than in that of the 'Ave Maria' in Pau. The spirit was good there, the atmosphere perfect, the mentality something quite peculiar to itself. Numbers of the old girls add their testimony to mine; for everything within us vibrates when we speak of the Sacred Heart, and our memories are as enduring as our gratitude."

[1] *Souvenirs*, written for the writer by Comtesse de Balincourt, *née* Louise de Thury.

PART III

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TRADITION

SAN PEDRO, LIMA. ST. CHARLES'S COLLEGE, LONDON.

MARMOUTIER, TOURS. TRINITÀ DEI MONTI, ROME. SANCTA SOPHIA, SYDNEY.

SEISHIN GAKIUN, TOKYO. ROEHAMPTON, LONDON.

Chapter I

A COLLEGE IN THE STATES

"The *Plan of Studies* bids us take into account, on the one hand, the general standard of education and instruction in the children's surroundings, and on the other, the degree of development of which the children themselves are capable." [1]

IF the worth of a principle may be judged in its application, the value of a tradition can be measured by its power of adaptation, a living tradition manifesting itself by growth and development, by ready adaptability together with abiding identity, by absence of pettiness side by side with adherence to principle. Thus, a tradition may often gain by being transplanted, different circumstances calling out a greater complexity in the organisation, and a correspondingly richer, fuller, life.

In the third part of this book, an attempt will be made to show some developments of the educational activity of the Society of the Sacred Heart. An exhaustive study would involve a survey of scholastic laws all over the world, and would hardly be of worth unless monumental.[2] Moreover, the great disadvantage of such a compilation would be found in the ever-changing conditions of the school world, which is, also, so intimately bound up with the shifting world of politics that what exists to-day may be swept aside to-morrow. When one considers that within the last fifteen years the Society of the Sacred Heart has lost, through earthquake, a well-equipped school in Japan, through incendiarism a century-old Spanish convent, through State robbery more than one Mexican house, one realises, on the one hand, how fleeting and unreliable are

[1] *Plan of Studies*, 1922 edition, p. 11.

[2] Mlle Arató has made a study of secondary education of girls in many European countries in her book, *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes Filles en Europe*, but this must necessarily be incomplete on account of its brevity.

material conditions, and on the other, how enduring and abiding is that intangible force which we call tradition, and which lives on amid changes and vicissitudes, independent of fine building or secure endowment.

It was to the United States that the Society of the Sacred Heart first transplanted its tradition, and if it be true to say that France is " the country where the greatest genius is he who voices the generally accepted opinion,"[1] one might wonder what welcome there would be for the colony of French nuns settling in a young country struggling to find ever more adequate expression for its own undeveloped personality. Yet the land to which Mother Duchesne arrived in 1818 had something akin to her own. Filled with an essentially missionary spirit—and are not all true educators missionaries ?—she began in poverty and isolation to spread the knowledge of love of Jesus Christ, and the refining influence which comes from contact with gentle things. Looking back over the years that have prepared the way for present-day activities, one of the American colleges can say :

The hands are filled that ne'er have tilled,
With corn the bright'ning breezes gild.
The sowers wrought with earnest thought
Nor knew the fruit their toil had brought ;
Mid hopes and fears they sowed in tears,
We reap the increase of the years.[2]

So sings Manhattanville, a college which gives a good example of the development of the Society's work to-day. Before considering, however, the details of its daily life, we may venture a little into the historian's province and

[1] See above, Introduction.

[2] From *The Tower*, 1928, p. 18 (published by the College of the Sacred Heart, Manhattanville, New York City).

trace the events that led up to this development. This is no easy task, for historical-mindedness was not one of the gifts brought by the pioneer nuns from Europe. On the contrary, their records are baffling by their vagueness. A bursar's entry of "A case of books from France" makes one surmise that French studies were carried on; the presence of a distinguished guest, on Prize Day, makes one long for some definite knowledge of the curriculum that lay behind these prizes. However, we have the Journals of Mother Duchesne[1] (not much concerned with scholastic matters) and a large number of her letters, also the official "Annual Letters" of the Society and biographies of the nuns.[2] From these may be gathered that the French plan of studies was adopted in all the houses, though parallel English classes were organised after the first years. French culture lingered on for the first half of the nineteenth century, a fact that will be readily understood when one realises the social and cultural conditions of the Mississippi valley where the first foundations were made. It is only when projected against their own peculiar background that the schools of St. Charles, Florissant, and St. Louis (in Missouri), of Grand Coteau and St. Michael (in Louisiana) can be understood. All these foundations were made before 1828. Then there was a period of consolidation during which no new houses were founded, and it was not until 1841 that a double venture opened up further fields of work, namely, the Indian Mission at Sugar Creek and the first New York foundation at Houston Street.

The valley of the Mississippi, long the property of the Spaniards, was from early days settled by French traders

[1] These are at present in the hands of the Roman Commission which is examining the cause of Canonisation of Mother Duchesne.

[2] See bibliography, especially the Life of Mothers Duchesne, Hardey, Shannon, and Tommasini.

and evangelised by French missionaries, so that when, at the beginning of the century, Spain ceded the territory to France the future of the West seemed to depend upon that country, while French influence took an even deeper hold. But Napoleon needed money, and the rapidly growing population of the Eastern States was chafing to cross the mountain barrier, so Louisiana was sold and a great western movement began. "Over the mountains, the great valley two thousand miles wide, with its unified river system four thousand miles long, opened an empire such as man had never seen. . . . Louder and louder rose the sound of the Saxon. Along the whole front of the moving American 'West,' a myriad axes swung . . . as the trees crashed and the clearings multiplied with incredible swiftness."[1]

In the seething years that ensued, the Mississippi valley, largely French and Catholic, found a strong element of stability in its numerous Creole[2] families, and these families needed schools for their sons and daughters, many of whom were sent to France, while the others were entrusted to the Jesuits in St. Louis or to the Ursuline nuns of New Orleans. It was at this convent, the oldest in the States, that Mother Duchesne received a welcome which will always be remembered with gratitude by the Society of the Sacred Heart.

After a disheartening beginning at St. Charles and Florissant, the Society gathered together one hundred pupils at Grand Coteau, and over two hundred at St. Michael. These schools were unfortunately to decrease in numbers

[1] *The Epic of America*, James Truslow Adams, p. 146.

[2] Paul Beckwith in *Créoles de St. Louis* (St. Louis, 1893), defines a Creole as "one born of European parents in the American colonies of France and Spain, or in the United States which once were such colonies, especially those of French or Spanish descent who are natives of Louisiana."

after the civil war. St. Louis, in addition to a good number of boarders, maintained a free day-school, which may be counted as the foundation-stone of the splendid parish system now flourishing in that Catholic city. It also had an orphanage. The nuns of the Sacred Heart came to St. Louis three years before the property qualification had been abolished as a condition for voting, and ten years before Horace Mann's election as Secretary for the Massachusetts Board of Education. The convent, which grew up with the city, was firmly established by the time that the public non-sectarian schools gave concrete utterance to the views of Jefferson and Mann. Indeed, the Society may be said to have done lonely pioneer work before the year 1840. One may feel sobered at the thought of the great task that was theirs, but one cannot but smile at the rather quaint advertisement it received in the *United States' Catholic Almanach* in the year 1834:

"Young Ladies' Academy at the Convent of the Sacred Heart, St. Louis, Mo." "In every establishment of learning, the salubrity of its site justly claims the first consideration of the public, health being confessedly the most valuable of the temporal gifts bestowed on man by his Creator. In this point of view, this Academy stands pre-eminent. Situated on an elevation which commands a delightful prospect of the Mississippi . . . the buildings are invariably ventilated with the purest air that can be breathed in the healthiest part of the State. A spacious garden and yard afford the pupils free scope for bodily exercise. . . .

"The following branches of useful and ornamental education are taught in the Academy: English and French, Reading, Writing, Grammar, Arithmetic, Sacred and Profane History, Geography, Use of the Globes, pro-

jection of maps, Mythology, Poetry, Rhetoric, Natural Philosophy and Domestic Economy, Sewing, Marking, Muslin, Tapestry and Bead Work, Painting on velvet and satin, Drawing, Painting in water colours and crayon, Shell and Chenille work, Artificial Flower making, Filigree, Hair-work and crystallised Parlour Ornaments, Music vocal and instrumental. . . ." The advertisement goes on to give the terms and the trousseau required; each pupil was to bring a green sun-bonnet, six capes of cambric, and one of black velvet. They wore black and white on Sundays and festivals, but on week-days they might wear "any decent garments whatever."

"The academic year commences on the 1st October and ends on the 8th or 10th of September. At the expiration of every quarter, a bulletin is sent to the Parents of each pupil, acquainting them with the state of her health, behaviour, and proficiency. The religious exercises of the Academy are Catholic. Young ladies of all denominations are admitted [1] provided they be willing . . . to assist at the public duties of religious worship performed in the House. The young ladies are permitted to spend the time of vacation at the Academy, nay, the Mistresses prefer that they do, because even that time, though granted for relaxation, may be very usefully improved. . . ."

The term *Academy*, used here to describe the convent school, was regularly given to an educational establishment offering a cultural programme rather wider than that of the Latin grammar schools. The advertisement seems to have kept the essentials of the Amiens plan of studies, but the addition of "hair-work" and of "crystallised parlour ornaments" makes one long for the vigorous insistence

[1] This was in virtue of a special dispensation of the Holy See, granted to meet the demand of the local bishop.

upon plain sewing and domestic economy, stressed by the French tradition.

With the foundation in New York, in 1841, there opened a new era of development, both as regards number of houses and educational activity, the first innovation being the creation of day schools. Hitherto, as is clear from the advertisement just quoted, children were entrusted to the nuns, not only for the long scholastic year, but often for the whole period of their education. In the somewhat rough environment of the frontier towns of the West this custom probably had many advantages, just as it had, for very different reasons, in the worldly atmosphere of the Paris of Louis XIV. In New York, however, conditions were other than in Louisiana, and some adaptation to the local needs became necessary in that house and in the many others founded in rapid succession—Astoria in 1844, Philadelphia, 1846, Manhattanville, 1847, Rochester, 1855. Then, in Canada, came the foundations in Montreal, Halifax, Sault-au-Recollet, not to mention others which for one reason or other had to be given up.

In the East, again, Detroit, Albany, Cincinnati, Providence, Boston, Madison Avenue (New York City), Grosse Pointe, were all founded before 1890; while in the South, West or Middle-west, Maryville[1] (St. Louis), New Orleans, St. Joseph's, Omaha, Menlo Park, San Francisco,[2] Chicago,

[1] Maryville Academy was reorganised as a Junior College in 1917, and as a Standard College in 1925. It is now a Corporate College of St. Louis University, offering some twenty-four different courses, including classics, modern languages, science, mathematics. A State Teacher's Certificate from the State of Missouri Department of Education may be obtained by those students who complete the theoretical and practical course in that subject.

[2] The San Francisco College for women, Lone Mountain, San Francisco, California, has a large enrolment though opened very recently. In addition to the ordinary academic courses it offers a "Pre-Nursing" curriculum and a Social Service Course. The College of Menlo Park was transferred thither in 1930.

opened different establishments. The boarding schools predominated and were, as always, the most normal channel of activity, but other types were adopted according to local needs. For instance, Grand Coteau, which holds the record as the house of the Society with the longest permanent existence, has, or has had, a boarding school, an orphanage, a free school for the Jesuit parish, and a normal school recognised by the State of Louisiana, while a school for Negro children is established in connection with the convent. Again, to choose another example, not from the States, but from Nova Scotia, the free school of Halifax was placed under government as far back as 1868, being very probably the first school of the Society to be thus recognised. Since then it has steadily increased both in number and prestige, having an enrolment of 250 pupils in 1894, and doubling that number by 1930. When at the beginning of the century the Christian Brothers closed their college in Halifax, the parents asked to have their boys prepared for the high school by the nuns of the Sacred Heart. Permission was obtained by cable to open this preparatory department, and now the Society has its "Old Boys" as well as its "Old Girls" obtaining posts of honour in universities and schools, in the professions and the world of commerce. "To-day, as in former years," writes one of the nuns from Halifax, "the Religious of the Sacred Heart realise that steadfastness of purpose, adherence to first principles, intelligent interest in what concerns their pupils, make for that influence which directs and encourages aspiration, controls the impulses, sympathises with their success and failure, to lift them to the highest and best, to God."[1]

So down the century the work of the Society continued

[1] Notes sent to the writer from Halifax, N.S., February 16th, 1934.

side by side with that of the other Teaching Congregations which increased in number as the years went by:[1] Ursulines, Sisters of Charity, Dominicans, Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Visitation nuns, and many others. On the whole, the boarding schools, when at their best, offered a fuller programme than was generally found elsewhere, especially as they could provide special facilities for the older girls to complete their education in Europe, if so desired. Moreover, the schools were kept singularly free from the many experiments, not to say "fads," which from time to time have tended to throw this or that American school off its balance. The French cultural tradition had something which has always appealed to the mentality of the States, which, in general, prefers a wide general culture to early specialisation. On this subject Miss Sara Burstall, writing in 1908, after visiting American schools, says: "Americans believe in a *liberal* education; their school tradition is to study subjects as humanising influences, as part of the right of a human being as such. . . . Probably the religious influences under which the American Colonies were founded had a good deal to do with this attitude of mind."[2] And again: "It is extremely difficult to compare the standards of work, but it is highly probable that the American pupil at eighteen does not possess so much actual knowledge as a member of one of our good Upper V or VI Forms. . . . What the American has gained from school training is general intellectual experience over a wide area, the power of self-directed work, a readiness for emergencies, the power of rapid acquisition, adaptability, and quick-

[1] The work of the Teaching Orders may be judged from the *Bulletin of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnæ* (issued from 131 East 29th Street, New York). The federation has a membership of 520 Alumnæ Associations, with an enrolment of approximately 100,000 graduates.

[2] *Impressions of American Education*, p. 35.

ness."[1] Miss Burstall noticed that: "Public opinion and the general tone of Society consider it natural and right for girls to be highly educated."[2] It is a pity that such an observant and sympathetic visitor should not have turned her attention to convent schools, especially to those which had behind them a long educational tradition. She who was so much struck with "the subordinate position of women in educational institutions,"[3] and still more by the fact that higher positions, organisations, initiative, administration, government were all "in the hands of men," might have learned that Reverend Mother Aloysia Hardey, who as Vicar of the American houses from 1842 to 1871 showed singular administrative gifts, was offered a place on the Board of Regents of the State of New York, an honour not yet at that time accorded to a woman. That the Society established its reputation for sound education may be judged by the following letter, written in 1930 by the President of Marygrove College, on the subject of the Society's Training Department at Kenwood, where the young nuns have their noviceship and juniorate: "This institution is by no means an isolated . . . preparatory school, but an integral part of the system conducted by the nuns of the Society of the Sacred Heart, an international organisation under unified direction, with preparatory schools and colleges for women all over the world. . . . In your studies of European Society, you must have often encountered this community, especially in France . . . their personnel, recruited from the upper classes in every land where they have been established, embodies the fine flower of the best European cultural tradition. . . . Through their centralised control they

[1] *Impressions of American Education*, p. 22.
[2] Ibid., p. 30. [3] Ibid., p. 275.

have stamped their unique standards of thoroughness and high cultural attainment uniformly upon all their schools and colleges throughout the world."[1] And again, where a recommendation was needed for two nuns of the Eastern Vicariate to obtain leave to study at Oxford, the President of the University of the State of New York, Commissioner of Education, could write: ". . . We have found the educational ideals and standards [of the religious of the Sacred Heart] to be excellent and they are carrying on a very constructive work in this State through their secondary school program and their college for women at Manhattanville. They have also developed a professional program for training teachers in their Order, and have had the advice of this department in working it out. . . ."[2] The above eulogistic letters will show that on the whole the Society of the Sacred Heart was able to establish and maintain the reputation of its schools. Being for many years well in advance of its time,[3] it was inevitably tempted to rely somewhat exclusively upon its own tradition and to keep itself, perhaps, in too great isolation from the general scholastic movement. But the highly organised system of accredited schools and colleges made such isolation impossible after a time, and so, towards the end of the last century, the academies of the Society of the Sacred Heart began to make the slight changes necessary in non-essentials in order to bring their programmes into line with those of recognised high schools. These changes, which in no way affected the outlook and the spirit of the education given, enabled the pupils to pass straight into the universities.

[1] Letter of December 31st, 1930.

[2] Letter of February 14th, 1930.

[3] This was the opinion of Reverend Mother Stuart in 1898, when she visited the American houses.

Finally, but very tardily, the Society established its colleges, at Clifton in 1916, Manhattanville, 1918, Maryville, 1925, Omaha, 1925, San Francisco, 1930, and elsewhere. These institutions maintain excellently the tradition of cultural education inherited from St. Madeleine Sophie.

The aims of the American College are well described in the Carnegie Foundation Report of 1907:[1] "There is a general agreement that the college exists for the purpose of training . . . under a wider or narrower conception of freedom, in those general studies which lead, not to a particular calling, but to a general view of the world and a comprehension of our duty to it. Its ideals are those of character and of service, but it seeks to establish these ideals mainly by teaching the process of right thinking. A college education intended simply to widen our sympathies without strengthening our vision would be a failure. A man's efficiency in the social order is equal to his moral purpose multiplied into his ability to think straight. The college claims to turn into the world citizens whose ability to think straight on moral, social, and political questions is, on the whole, higher than that of the man who lacks this training." That such an ideal is in no way foreign to the tradition of the Society of the Sacred Heart no one who has read the foregoing chapters could doubt. All that was needed on the part of the religious was a higher scholarship and adaptation to the customs of American university life. To this need allusion seems to be made in an address, delivered at Manhattanville by the Reverend Thomas Campbell, S.J., on November 21st, 1900, on the occasion of the centenary of the Society's foundation: "May we not hope that the daughters of the saintly woman, whom

[1] Quoted by Miss S. Burstall in *Impressions of American Education*, p. 14.

we revere to-day,[1] . . . may, in company with other religious women, while keeping all the graces of noble womanhood and all the virtues of their state, become leaders in the educational movement."

The movement alluded to was, of course, concerned pre-eminently with the foundation of women's colleges, which have for their object to give to girls between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two an education more complete than that of the four-year high school, and less specialised than that offered by the universities or technical departments for which these colleges serve as a preparation. Vassar College, Poughkeepsie (N.Y.) was founded in 1861; Wells College, Aurora (N.Y.), in 1868; Connecticut in 1875; Smith,[2] and Wellesley near Boston, also in 1875; Radcliffe,[3] in connection with Harvard, in 1879. Then Catholic foundations were made, Trinity[4] at Washington (D.C.), in 1897, by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur; St. Elizabeth at Convent, New Jersey, in 1900, by the Sisters of Charity; New Rochelle (N.Y.), in 1904, by the Ursulines. To these great colleges the Society of the Sacred Heart has united its efforts.

Fittingly, therefore, can Manhattanville be chosen as an example of adaptation without loss of essential character.

[1] St. Madeleine Sophie Barat.

[2] Smith, Wellesley and Radcliffe are in Massachusetts.

[3] See *Elizabeth Cary Agassiz*, L. Allen Paton, for a very interesting account of the Foundation of Radcliffe and the general trend of opinion on women's colleges in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.

[4] See *An Historical Sketch of Trinity College*, 1897–1925, p. 9. "The mere outline of the achievement of fifteen years shows uncommon mental and spiritual gifts and an administrative power of a very high order. Sister Superior Julia had all these and more. Hers was a heart of gold . . . to love all God's creatures as image and likeness, and the works of His hands; to love all true and beautiful things. . . . Her mind had the grasp of detail as well as the vision of the complete work. . . . She it was who drew up a schedule of studies . . . and also created the office of Supervisor of Schools in her Order."

This choice does not imply either that it is the most important of the Society's colleges or that this type of establishment is considered to be of greater value than the boarding schools, the day schools or the parish schools of different States. The college, with its cultural programme, stands out in sharp contrast to the feverish speed of life around it. If the youth of a country can flock in thousands to spend four years upon studies which do not always directly prepare for a career; and if, in any country, individuals and cities are ready to make vast pecuniary sacrifices for the upkeep of the college life, then surely such a land is rich in enthusiasm, in noble thoughts and in those spiritual qualities that alone give worth to life. It may suffer from the fever and fret of youth, but it has youth's lofty disinterestedness and an energy of which we, in tired Europe, hardly dream.

The girl who wishes to enter the College of the Sacred Heart at Manhattanville must present a record showing the satisfactory completion of a four-year school course, covering fifteen *units* of study, a unit corresponding to five forty-five minutes' period of class a week for one year, and representing approximately one-fourth of a full year's work. Moreover, the student must have passed some recognised examination in English, Latin, mathematics, and a modern language. Old pupils of the convents of the Sacred Heart are admitted on the Society's "vicariate tests"; other candidates can present the certificate of the College Entrance Examination Board, or that of the Regents of the University of New York, or of the Catholic University. Manhattanville, by making Latin an obligatory subject, sometimes closes its doors to a desirable student, but certainly keeps up a higher standard of study than would exist were that obligation to be abolished.

The *Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors,* and *Seniors,* as the students of the four years are named, each form a "class" under the care of their own warden, and are known by the date at which they should graduate, those who enter as freshmen in 1936 being called the "Class of 1940." The President of the College and the Dean exercise the duties of mistress-general and mistress-of-studies to over 250 students, but they have, in addition to the assistance afforded them by the wardens, the help of various committees, such as those on "Entrance Requirements," "Curriculum," "Examinations," "Library Needs," and others.

There are nearly fifty names on the roll of professors, some twenty of whom are nuns, holding appropriate qualifications obtained in thirty-eight different universities of Europe, Canada, and America. The secular professors, both men and women, are full-time, a fact which gives greater stability and security to the college studies.

A freshman is presented with a handbook [1] which seems sufficiently bewildering to an English reader, though it is the normal expression of American college life. From it she learns of the wide choice of subjects, from classics to journalism, from anatomy to cosmography, a certain number of these subjects, such as religion, philosophy, and English, being obligatory, while others, such as history, are held in special honour. According to the generally accepted system, every student must complete a certain number of *credit hours* in each of her subjects, an average of 85 per cent. being required for work on the *major subject* chosen for specialisation during the last two years of college life. Thus only a girl of well-developed interest and of sufficient intelligence can persevere to the end of a course. Manhattanville offers a "Pre-medical Major,"

[1] College of the Sacred Heart, Manhattanville (*Bulletin of Information*).

an intensive course in biology, anatomy, and related sciences, leading up to a degree that will qualify for entrance into a medical school.[1] Some training in philosophy[2] is given to every undergraduate, and forms a valuable element in her education, whether she is to enter the professions of law or medicine or else to do some kind of social work or teaching. The college course is looked upon as a time of mental training, a time to develop powers and to prepare for future specialisation.

An idea of college life may be gathered from the *Bulletin of Information*: "The Authorities look upon each student as a guardian of the regulations and responsible for their observance. A large part of the government falls upon the students, who are expected to prepare for the future by assuming the responsibility of their views and conduct in all college relations.

"The enforcement of student regulations is entrusted to a Student Government Committee consisting of officers elected from each class who work in co-operation with the House Warden.

"There is also a College Welfare Committee composed of members of the Faculty and Students in equal numbers. This Committee has charge of all non-scholastic activities, and is responsible for maintaining a high standard of taste and excellence in college events. It exercises a general control over student organisations, and defines the amount of extra-curricular activity that may be engaged in by individual students.

"The social life of the college is marked by dignity and

[1] In spite of the disfavour with which America still looks upon women doctors, two graduates of Manhattanville were accepted in 1934 at the Long Island College of Medicine, one of the foremost medical colleges of the States.

[2] See above, Part II, Ch. VI, the appreciation of this course by Father Woodlock, S.J.

freedom. Recreation and the cultivation of many desirable qualities are secured by various clubs and organisations. The religious life of the students is of first importance. Daily Mass, religious instruction, individual guidance, and participation in the liturgical life of the Church are normal factors of their training."

A special interest in the Liturgy has long been fostered by the Pius X School of Music established in connection with the college, an institution which has played a leading part in the liturgical movement in America.[1]

The girls' own record of their good time in college is to be found in the *Tower*, a charming pictorial album offered annually by the third year or junior class to the outgoing seniors. It has all the ingenuousness and flaming ardour of youth, and tells of what the girls enjoy, praising generously but exerting an effectual power of criticism by the fearless way in which it can withhold praise. The *Tower* introduces us to the *Dramatis Personæ*, the faculty, the undergraduates, especially to the officers of the various Societies, and to the members of the editorial staff. In one recent number the reader is invited to walk beneath the motto *Ludens Coram Domino* into the new building of Lombard architecture wherein Manhattanville takes its recreation. Gymnasium and swimming pool, solarium, bowling alley, indoor courts for tennis and basket ball, installation for golf practice, lounge, kitchenettes, and winter-gardens make the historian feel very far away from the "spacious garden and yard" of the old days of St. Louis.

[1] The Pius X School of Liturgical Music has completed its eighteenth year of labour in the restoration of liturgical music. In the year 1934 it conducted six summer schools in the following centres—Manhattanville, the Catholic University, Washington (D.C.), Rochester (N.Y.), Detroit (Michigan), St. Louis, Missouri, and Omaha (Nebraska). It aids in the training of many choirs in New York, and gives concerts and demonstrations in addition to the regular work of the school.

Personalities are also introduced to us by friendly little character sketches which accompany a distinguished student's photograph and the record of her achievement, while various activities are described, the social work, the Missionary Association, the Clavian Club, that binds its members together by such high loves as the *Fourth Dimension* and the *Slide-Rule*, but does not disdain to come down to a dramatic skit on "Mechanics." The classical scholars act Greek and Latin plays, and hold learned discussions. The *Cercle français* divides its attention between French classics and French contemporary thought. The Spanish Club has its flights into mysticism, and its serious analysis of the career of Bolivar, but it, too, can come down to organise a mock bull-fight, on which occasion the whole college turned Spanish. The *Circolo Italiano* lately voiced the students' Christmas wishes to the Superior in its own most musical language, to the ready sound of a *piffero*, and before a typical Italian crib. While the Glee Club gives concerts, the Thumb-tack Club, claiming to be unique of its kind, calls for no special talents in its members, save "a desire to cultivate personal taste by appreciation of the results of taste in the work of others." The meetings take on many aspects, such as the "study of evening gowns, illustrating the point that modern styles are returning to an ancient Greek simplicity." In another meeting members volunteered as subjects for æsthetic criticism. "They were rewarded with various comments on the style of dress and hair arrangement best suited for them individually."[1] This Club, which seems to provide a healthy outlet for feminine interest in dress, a more sensible method than the old-fashioned way of stern repression, often helps with the production of college plays.

[1] *The Tower* 1931, p. 89.

The Debating Society, coached by a director and criticised professionally, discussed in 1933 the motion that: "Olympic Games promote international goodwill"; "Manhattanville should have a College Newspaper"; "Present conditions justify a moderate inflation of the currency"; "Modern advertising is more detrimental than beneficial to the best interests of the American people"; "The talking pictures will eventually eliminate the legitimate stage."

College activities are too numerous to catalogue, but we must mention the Dramatic Association which produces plays grave and gay, from *Twelfth Night* to an original religious drama *Among Women.* This play tells of the influence exerted by the Blessed Virgin upon women in the Temple and at Nazareth, a theme that cannot but lie very close to the heart of the Manhattanville Children of Mary; for the students who engage in all the modern pursuits chronicled by the *Tower* are for the most part members of the congregation of Our Lady. It must be remembered that the undergraduates of the colleges, like the pupils of the academies, are members of that great family which looks back to St. Madeleine Sophie; they share in all the devotions, the loyalties, and the aspirations of other Children of the Sacred Heart throughout the world. This is true of the students of Manhattanville, and equally so of those of the other colleges of the Society whose work and organisation are similar to those described above. To the tradition which they have inherited the college students of Maryville,[1] of San Francisco, of Manhattanville have brought the gift of their own energetic, enthusiastic young life, their wide interests, their spirit of enterprise and their hopefulness. A nun on the staff of one of the colleges

[1] Note the record of one of the nuns at Maryville College, Professor and Head of Department of Physics and Mathematics. She is now a member of the American

to-day can, therefore, write: "Seeing Manhattanville from the inside, one realises how the spirit of the Society and the whole teaching power stored up in our fourth vow, come to a happy outlet in this kind of work . . . one feels that Manhattanville is thoroughly American. It is because of the genius of the *Plan of Studies* which lends itself to all manner of developments that this sort of work can be carried on."[1]

Physical Society, American Mathematical Society, the Academy of Science of St. Louis, the American Association of Physics Teachers, Fellow of the American Association for the advancement of Science, and has published results of research on surface tension of sodium and mercury.

[1] Letter to the writer, July 16th, 1934.

Chapter II

SOME TYPES OF ACTIVITY IN FRANCE AND BELGIUM

"Knowing as we do that in the ordinary course of Providence, our children are destined to become wives and mothers of families, we endeavour to prepare them to fulfil this vocation. . . . We aim at sending out into the world girls who would be ready for the opportunities and responsibilities of their lives."[1]

In her investigations into the secondary education of girls in the principal countries of Europe, Mlle. Arató has been forced to a conclusion which stands out in marked contrast to the above statement. Her opinion is that[2]: "If we enquire how far the Secondary School prepares the growing girl either in the capacity of a former pupil, or as the mother of a family, to help and complete the work of the teachers, and, if, moreover, we ask what are the aims of the school in relation to a woman's natural vocation, we are forced to own that, in this respect, the various programmes are still very unsatisfactory. For both administrators and teachers are inclined to think that because a girl has chosen a type of education leading to University studies, she has by that very fact entered upon an intellectual way of life which will throw her into contact with a masculine rival rich with the inheritance of centuries of culture, whom she can only hope to equal by excessive hard work." In other words, the writer, excepting only a few types such as the Frauenschule[3] of Germany and Austria, finds the secondary schools for girls in Europe unquiet places where rivalry and imitation of boys' colleges occupy the foremost place.

The Society of the Sacred Heart is "essentially a feminine order, a woman's order, seeking in its whole tone and spirit

[1] *Plan of Studies*, English translation of 1922 edition, Introduction, p. iv.
[2] *L'Enseignement secondaire des jeunes Filles en Europe*, Mlle. Arató, part ii, chap. v.
[3] See below, Chap. IV.

and training and manner of life a woman's excellence, the perfection of womanhood.[1]" In this chapter an account will be given of some of the characteristic activities of "old children" in Belgium and France. And because in every convent of the Sacred Heart past and present pupils are knit together by a close bond of union, we must here describe some works which have their origin in the school though they only come to full development in after life.

It must be clear from the beginning that in choosing two countries as illustrating the character of a tradition, no invidious comparison is being drawn with others; for similar activities will be found among all the old children of the Sacred Heart. The Society firmly holds that a school is judged by its former pupils. To them it looks, and not to honours' lists or statistics or present-day achievements. Mere numbers and an ample endowment may help to produce satisfactory results in any hastily created school to-morrow, but an enduring and valued tradition can alone secure life-long loyalty, confidence, and co-operation.

School is a place of preparation, where, metaphorically speaking, doors and windows are opened upon vistas hitherto unknown. When life's adventure begins, it is good to travel not alone, to be able to come back for guidance and sympathy to the cradle of one's childhood's hopes. And if hospitality has ever been a monastic virtue, and if the traveller upon the dangerous roads of Mediæval Europe was always sure of a welcome in any monastery at whose door he might chance to knock, then how much more surely may an "old child" travelling upon life's sometimes weary way count upon a welcome, upon finding rest and spiritual comfort from those who have watched over the years of her childhood.

[1] J. E. Stuart, *The Society of the Sacred Heart*, p. 96.

From the foundation of the Society, the former pupils were looked upon as an integral part of the great organisation, as is clearly visible from an early letter of Mother Barat to Mother Adrienne Michel.[1] Some institution was bound to grow up for their benefit, and one is hardly surprised to find the congregation of the Children of Mary, established by Mother Eugénie de Gramont at the Rue de Varenne, forming the nucleus of such an association. Indeed, this congregation came to be not only the binding force which united the old children with one another and with their school, but also the fountain-head of their activities, devotional, charitable, intellectual, and social. It might perhaps be true to say that, for nearly a century, the Society knew no other institution for its past pupils than the "Children of Mary of the World," as they were somewhat quaintly styled.

The first branch was opened in 1832 at Lyons with the help and encouragement of Père Druilhet, who drew up statutes which are still observed to-day. Personal sanctification, contact with their former mistresses and with one another, works of charity, intelligent study, these were the chief objects of a congregation founded in an age when clubs and other social organisations were rare. The members met at the nearest convent of the Sacred Heart for devotional exercises, for needlework, lectures and conferences, and arranged among themselves visits to hospitals, religious lessons to neglected children, collections in aid of the good works of the neighbourhood. The younger members often formed themselves into a literary academy, an essentially French institution, in order to hold meetings where they discussed classical or contemporary literature or criticised one another's literary efforts. Such academies

[1] From Amiens, June 7th, 1814.

exist in many French convents of the Sacred Heart to-day, with the difference that the members are now often University women who turn aside from their studies for *Licence* or Doctorate in order to write papers on such subjects as: "Education through the Ages," "Communism," "Great Leaders of To-day,"[1] or to hear a spirited lecture on "Boredom"[2] or on the "Art of Growing Old."[3]

Finally, there is a fruit that ever grows upon the tree of friendship, the fruit of mutual helpfulness. The Children of Mary in many lands discreetly organise some method of assisting those of their number whose circumstances have been unfortunate. Often enough the offering will pass through the hands of a nun who alone has the secret of its destination; though since the Great War, when need has become so widespread, an official bureau is sometimes opened, as the Spanish "Centro de Socorros mutuos para las antiguas Alumnas del Sagrado Corazón."

Mgr. Baunard has much to say of the Frenchwomen who in the last century did honour to the Society of the Sacred Heart. He devotes half a chapter to Caroline de Beaufort,[4] later Comtesse de la Grandville, one of the first pupils of Amiens, a benefactress of every charitable work in Lille. All Mother Barat's teaching upon the responsibilities and duties of a Child of Mary come out in her correspondence with Caroline. There are many other names mentioned by the same writer,[5] those of the Comtesse de Lostange, Comtesse de Lagarde, Madame de Raymond, Madame Marbeau, among many women who formed part of a generation to whom the French genius and the Chris-

[1] Topics of the Academy of the Sacred Heart at Lille, 1933.
[2] Lecture given by Reverend Père Humblet at Ostend, 1927.
[3] Paper read by an "Académicienne" at Lyons, Rue Boissac, 1933.
[4] *Histoire de la Vénérable Mère Barat*, vol. ii, pp. 491 et seq.
[5] *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 451.

tian spirit owed so much at the opening of the last century. These women in high positions exerted a strong influence upon institutions and organisations which even to-day are the mainstay of the Church in France. Others, again, in the retirement of their homes, proved themselves to be of the race of those of whom the Scripture tells us that "their children have risen up and called them blessed."

In this era of clubs and societies, when religious sodalities, charities, social work, games, and entertainments all make claims upon the adolescent, the various associations of past pupils of the Society of the Sacred Heart may take on new forms and develop a more complicated structure. In some places, however, as in Bois l'Evêque, near Liège, the members have asked to return to their primitive setting. They have found that, as "Children of Mary," they may embrace every kind of good work and open their minds to every new interest, however varied these may be.

The Society of the Sacred Heart, without ever taking the lead in purely intellectual and academic studies, has been characterised in Belgium by the tact and adaptability with which it has been fitted into the national life, so that since the foundation of the first Belgian house, nearly one hundred years ago, it has taken on almost every form of scholastic development. The great monastic household of Jette-St.-Pierre, outside Brussels, gathers within its walls the Belgian Novitiate and Juniorate, a boarding school, elementary and central schools, whose numbers run into hundreds, not to speak of clubs, sodalities, and other social institutions. A description of the convent under Reverend Mother de Cléry, who in the last decade of the nineteenth century governed it somewhat after the manner of a mediæval abbess,[1] shows us that "a thousand children

[1] *Religieuses du Sacré Cœur*, vol. iii, pp. 118, 119.

benefited by the teaching, little boys of the Infant Department lingering on as long as they might. They stayed to be taught sufficient Latin to enable them to enter a Seminary. A school of Domestic Economy was opened for the older girls. It was enough to speak to Reverend Mother de Cléry of a couple in distress, for her resourceful kindness to find some way of coming to their assistance, and so the poor were ever ready to sing her praises and to flock to the convent in search of her counsel. Ever on the watch for opportunities to give labour to the workmen, and with a quick eye to see possibilities of improvements, she added to the buildings, opened up wells, and improved the water supply of the whole neighbourhood. The good of souls was her chief preoccupation in all her undertakings.... To the women's congregation dedicated to St. Anne, she added, for men, the "Guard of Honour of the Blessed Sacrament," and herself brought their banner to Rome to be blessed by Pope Leo XIII, certain that he would take a special interest in such a good work...."

Leo XIII, as Mgr. Pecci, Papal Nuncio in Brussels, had not only been a familiar visitor at the convent of Jette, but had also organised among the children a literary academy which still bears his name. He ever remained interested in those children, drawn from many nationalities.

Jette is to-day, as it was in the last century, a place of peace and ordered activity, but a new and deeply formative influence has come to it from the presence in the convent chapel of the body of St. Madeleine Sophie, brought thither from France in the early troubled years of the century. In a Gothic sanctuary, the foundress of the Society rests, exerting in death as in life a quiet influence that makes for peace and hope, and heavenly-mindedness.

One may trace a likeness to the Saint's spirit in the

missionary ardour of the Belgian children. How indeed could they remain indifferent to the missions when they see a colony of nuns leave from their Vicariate to found schools in the Congo, and when their own Superior visits these new posts? The little review *En Famille* throbs with the interests inherent in the native schools of the Congo Mission which the "old children" help to finance. The Belgian schoolgirls are also specially interested in the convents in South America, for their Superior, Reverend Mother Symon,[1] was appointed visitor of these houses, and her letters show how the pioneer work, done in the last century by Mother du Rousier, has come to wonderful fruition to-day. Speaking of the inheritance of past years she shows that the cult of tradition is meant to be no mere sentimental luxury, but a stimulus and a responsibility. After describing the efficiency of the South American schools, both elementary and secondary, and especially the good done by the training college in Peru, the writer reminds the pupils past and present of the incredible difficulties that had to be surmounted, in the early days, by the nuns who went out to South America, and of the generous help they received from the benefactors who had called them hither. Then comes the challenge to the girls of to-day: "And do you think that so many great men and women would have put themselves out in order to people their lands with headless, backboneless nonentities . . . or with girls who were merely bad imitations of their brothers? . . . What they aimed at was peace and happiness for their countries, and this they hoped to bring about by establishing in their midst those serious and charming homes to be associated with old children of the Sacred Heart."[2]

[1] Now one of the four Assistants-General of the Society of the Sacred Heart.
[2] *En Famille*, May 1932, p. 6.

If missionary enterprise evokes a ready response in the heart of a Belgian, social work holds an almost equal place in his affections. The convents of the Sacred Heart in Belgium are in themselves object lessons of social activity. The many-sided life at Jette has been described. Lindhout, in Brussels, also houses about a thousand children in three different schools, in one of which Princess Marie José, now Princess of Piedmont, was educated between 1919-1924.[1] Bois l'Evêque has had for over fifty years an association for the miners of Liége. Ostend gathers together *grandes pensionnaires*, mostly foreign girls from every part of the globe, who combine with the study of the French language a serious preparation for their duties in after life. These girls were easily won over to the cause of the "Association Catholique Jeunesse Belge Féminine" by Mlle. de Hemptinne in her conference of 1927.[2]

Soon after this date, the convent of Bois l'Evêque was entertaining 1,500 *Jocistes*, or members of the *Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne*,[3] while Jette had, in the summer of 1929, a study week for 230 of the same Association, and in 1931 another for 200 *Jécistes*. In this last branch of feminine Catholic action, namely the *Jeunesse Estudiantine Chrétienne*, a number of the older girls from all the convents had by this time enrolled themselves. Henceforth, Children of the Sacred Heart, past and present, meet for study, for social service, for recreation, and for devotional exercises.

[1] *En Famille*, January 1930, gives a charming sketch of the Princess's schooldays, and of the Royal visits. Sometimes the King would appear on a Saturday evening to drive home his daughter with her white mice or other treasures, or he would draw maps to help her in her examinations.

[2] *En Famille* for May 1927. In this number and in the one for September following there is an amusing account of how the *grandes pensionnaires* helped the *Little Sisters of the Poor* in Ostend, especially by keeping them supplied with much needed, if somewhat broken down, horses.

[3] *En Famille*, September 1928.

But there have long been similar activities peculiar to the convents of the Sacred Heart, and herein lies a problem which must needs beset any school with a well-defined tradition. There are, on the one hand, obvious advantages in bringing schoolgirls into touch with a movement so vast and so eminently national, that will some day make a call upon their powers of devotion or of intelligent leadership. But, on the other hand, a school may lose far more than it will gain by transferring outside itself the centre of its interests and its loyalties. Certain it is, however, that the best preparation for social work in the world is to learn to think clearly and to sacrifice oneself with courage. Girls who have learned this lesson will be ready for future opportunities.

There is one duty particularly necessary for the past pupils of any school, namely, the furthering of their intellectual education. In Belgium, as in other countries, a certain number of the old girls will pass into the University, but if the Society is to equip its children for the need of the world to-day some well-planned courses of study must be provided for all who can benefit by them. Such courses are being everywhere organised. They take the form generally of lectures on philosophy and social science, training in teaching and domestic economy, or more specialised literary work.

The *cours complémentaires* of the convent at Antwerp and the *cours supérieurs* of Ixelles speak well for the serious outlook and steady application to study of the Belgian girl. Ixelles, which offers very little in the way of official diplomas, counts some two hundred students, a number of whom are boarders, in the charming modern building lately erected for them. The majority are "old children" from different convents in Belgium, though a

fair number come from lands as distant as Japan or South America. Lectures are given[1] in theology, philosophy, jurisprudence, political economy, social science, finance, education, history, literature, science, art, archæology, Latin and modern languages, while there are practical courses in domestic economy, music, Red Cross nursing, the care of children, shorthand, and typewriting. Visits to museums and to art galleries, debates and private coaching, all prepare the girls for the examinations for which certificates are given by the professors. A real family spirit animates the student-body which migrates yearly to Jette for some days of quiet retreat among the woods and streamlets of that secluded place; for always, and under whatever aspect they may be organised, the children of the Sacred Heart are chiefly bound together by the strong bond of religion, which is for them the very substance of their lives.

The Society of the Sacred Heart has lately opened a house in Louvain, where, in close touch with practical teaching on missionary and social lines, it will have every opportunity of gaining that scholarship which is essential if it is to have a place in the world of education.

Such, then, are some of the activities of the children of the Sacred Heart in Belgium and France.[2] To extend one's survey all over the world would be impossible. One might be tempted to give a roll of honour of past pupils

[1] Prospectus of the *Cours Supérieurs du Sacré Cœur d'Ixelles, Bruxelles*, 412 Chaussée de Waterloo. To this it is interesting to compare a speech made to the *Fédération des Femmes Catholiques à Bruxelles*, October 30th, 1916, by Professor F. Collard, of the University of Louvain : " Comment élever nos Jeunes Filles."

[2] The Belgian Youth Movement was recently taken as an example of efficient organisation and spirited effort in a Teachers' Conference entitled " After-School Care for Youth," in Sydney, Australia. See *The Catholic Press* for June 9th, 1932; article by " A Religious of the Sacred Heart," Rose Bay.

beginning with the six foundresses of religious orders [1] and coming down to such a well-known modern social worker as Joaquina Cunill, so lately taken from her work in Barcelona. This brief sketch, however, will suffice to give the tradition, which may be traced like a golden thread running through different times and various organisations right back to the little cobble-stoned town of Joigny, where 150 years ago Madeleine Sophie Barat looked out upon a troubled world and dreamed of doing some good with her life. It is a curious experience to stand upon the bridge which spans the Yonne and to look down upon its blue and smiling waters, as the young girl did so many years ago. On the one hand lies the little town, and on the other the great world beyond. So it was with her life, and so it is with all our lives—there is a bridge to cross between opportunity and realisation. Each one's fate is in his hands; the fate of every school is in the hands of its old children. Where they live up to their training and co-operate loyally in the work which they have been taught to value, they are a reward and crown to those who have devoted themselves to their care. Where they fail they are a bitter sorrow. "Beloved children," said Pope Pius XI to a group of Children of Mary on the occasion of the jubilee of their congregation, "in addressing you, we

[1] 1. Fanny Kastre, 1824–82, a Belgian, educated at Charleville, founded the *Dames de St. Julienne.*

2. Marie Deluil Martigny, 1841–83, a Frenchwoman, educated at La Ferrandière, Lyons, founded *Les Filles du Cœur de Jésus.*

3. Anna de Meeus, a Belgian, educated at the Rue de Varenne, founded the Institute of the *Blessed Sacrament.*

4. Eugénie de Smet, 1825–71, a Frenchwoman, educated at Lille, founded the *Auxiliatrices du Purgatoire.*

5. Joséphine de Schaffgotsch, a German, educated at Marienthal, near Münster, founded the *Sœurs de St. Joseph.*

6. Octavie Grosjean, educated at Eden Hall, Philadelphia, U.S.A., founded near Grenoble, France, *Les Petites Sœurs de l'Ouvroir.*

mean to speak to all the Children of Mary, whom we see as in a splendid vision. Each one must be such as to deserve to be called the *Glory of Mary*. Each one should be in her life and by the inner principles of her apostleship such that Mary could look upon her with maternal pride. Children of Mary, Glory of Mary! With what happiness do we bless your apostleship, your congregation . . . and all the mothers to whom we give our gratitude in union with you." [1]

[1] "Dilettissime Figlie, parliamo a voi e intendiamo parlare a tutte le Figlie di Maria che vediamo come in una splendidissima visione. Ognuna dev'essere qui e meritarsi quest' elogio: *Gloria Mariæ;* ciascuna dev'essere tale, nella sua vita, nell' interna formazione del suo apostolato, che Maria vada maternamente fiera e superba di lei. Figlia di Maria, Gloria di Maria! E con questa felicissima constatazione benediciamo il vostro apostolato, la vostra Congregazione . . . tutte le Madri per le quali uniamo la Nostra alla vostra gratitudine." Audience granted to the Children of Mary of the Trinità dei Monti by Pope Pius XI on March 31st, 1932, and recorded in *Lumen et Vinculum*, the review of the Italian Vicariate, published in Florence.

Chapter III

ENGLISH SCHOOLGIRLS

"It was quite ideal that nothing should have stopped where I left it, but that all should have gone on to something better."[1]—J. E. STUART.

IN order to see in a right perspective the work of the Society of the Sacred Heart in the British Isles since the first foundations in 1842, it will be well to study it in the light of a threefold consideration. In the first place, it must be remembered that the second half of the nineteenth century was an era of rapid progress in matters educational, and that it witnessed the creation and splendid development of English Girls' Schools. Secondly, one must bear in mind the thorough if unobtrusive work done for the Catholic girl by various teaching congregations; and, finally, one must project these English-speaking convents against the background of the tradition of the whole Order.

Indeed, it may be said that to anyone who seeks to trace the development of that tradition no country offers a more fascinating study than does our own. For we, who in pre-Reformation days brought up our girls upon much the same lines as did our continental neighbours, had in the nineteenth century no national system and no tradition for their education. In the words of an unprejudiced historian: "The destruction of the monasteries affected the sexes differently. The dissolution found women quite unprepared and dealt their education such a severe blow that it is no exaggeration to say it passed under a cloud for 300 years."[2] From out of this cloud Englishwomen were just beginning to emerge when, at the request of Lord

[1] Letter to Roehampton from Brussels, June 22nd, 1913.

[2] *Education of Girls and Women in Great Britain*, C. J. Bremner, p. 2.

Clifford, Mother Barat sent his nun-daughter, together with Mother d'Avenas [1] and Mother Charlotte Goold [2] to make a foundation in England. The tradition of the Society had, then, to be gradually adapted to the mentality of the English people and to keep pace with the rapid changes and various educational experiments of a period as full of unrest as it was of creative activity. Education was in the air. Women breathed the atmosphere of Ruskin's *Queens' Gardens* and felt themselves surrounded by the influence of their great sovereign. Tennyson's *Princess* came out in 1847 and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* in 1856. Lectures [3] given for women at Queen's College since the 'forties opened up for them the University of London, and prepared the way for the foundation of Bedford College in 1869, the same year as the inauguration of Girton. While Girton strove to prove to Cambridge that women could follow courses of study identical with those planned for men,[4] Newnham, founded in 1871, was seeking to set up a standard of scholarship equally thorough but more adapted to feminine minds. The National Union for the Education of Women and the *Girls' Public Day School Company* came into existence at about this time, the latter chiefly through the instrumentality of Miss Buss, whose *North London Collegiate School* in Camden Street became the model of girls' high schools. What Miss

[1] See above, Part II, Chap. VI, p. 170.

[2] Mother Goold became Superior of the first English house.

[3] In a chapter entitled "The Reform of Female Education," of Archer's *Secondary Education in the Nineteenth Century*, there is a good synopsis of the development of higher education for women.

[4] See *Girton College, 1869–1932*, Barbara Stephen, pp. 16 and 17 especially. Miss Davies held that there was no agreement, either among experts or among the public, as to what a special system of education for women should be, and consequently battled for absolute equality of examinations for undergraduates of both sexes.

Buss was doing in London her contemporary, Miss Beale, was to do at Cheltenham, and her pupil, Miss Burstall, in Manchester, while Miss Soulsby was setting up in the Oxford High School a standard of good scholarship and happy intercourse between mistress and pupil. Another line of progress was opened up with the foundation of the Training College for Women and the consequent improvement of elementary schools for girls.

The task that lay before the religious of the Sacred Heart was, then, to create within their schools a characteristically English tone and outlook without losing anything of that tradition which, if in itself primarily Catholic and of world-wide appeal, had nevertheless been handed down in its French setting. That the Society has adapted itself to the national system may be proved from the fact that it has in the British Isles to-day 9 elementary schools, some with evening classes; 6 day schools, of which 3 are recognised grant-aided high schools; 8 private boarding schools; 3 training colleges; and a hostel for past pupils studying at Oxford. Nuns of the Sacred Heart have been taking degrees at the University of London [1] since the year 1893, and they have had their training centre at Roehampton. From Roehampton colonies of nuns have gone forth to found schools in Australia,[2] Malta and Japan.

The testimony of a French witness can be adduced to prove that this adaptation to national requirements has taken place without any loss of the traditional outlook.

[1] When, in 1933, a nun of the Sacred Heart won the Chancellor's prize for English at Oxford, the *Catholic Woman's Outlook* for the following January commented on "the revolution in Catholic Education, which has actually taken place," and on "the evidence of an expanded vision on the part of our Teaching Orders and of public authorities." It is evident that the "revolution" is no sudden upheaval but the result of slow development.

[2] The Society has boarding schools in Australia and New Zealand, and a college affiliated to the University of Sydney.

In articles entitled "L'Education familiale," published in *Les Etudes* for July 5th and 20th, 1933, M. Lucien Roure makes a survey of the education of French girls through the ages and concludes by the mention of Reverend Mother Stuart's book *The Education of Catholic Girls*.[1] Of this treatise, which may be said to embody in an especial way the theory underlying the school at Roehampton, M. Roure, after commenting upon its markedly English tone, speaks as follows: "Même dans la traduction libre, un lecteur français s'aperçoit vite de cette origine au mouvement de la pensée d'une spontanéité plus libre que la pensée française, d'une allure moins rectiligne, avec souvent quelque chose d'imprévu, au recours soudain à l'expérience pour appuyer et souligner les principes. Ce qui frappe tout lecteur intelligent, c'est avec la très haute idée que l'auteur se fait de l'éducation, le sens du réel, la recherche d'une culture équilibrée, la conscience d'un progrès possible en pédagogie, unie au respect de la tradition."[2]

Thus through years of uncertainty and experiment the convents of the Sacred Heart, while sharing in a certain measure in the tentative spirit of the country, could, nevertheless, derive stability from tradition and international connections, and to-day a French writer, reviewing the work of Fénelon, of St. Cyr, and of the ancient Teaching Orders, can find their ideas and the spirit they breathe in an English treatise on the education of Catholic girls.

[1] Published by Longmans in 1911.

[2] "Even in a free translation the French reader quickly senses the origin by the freedom of the thought, which shows a greater spontaneity than would characterise a French mind. It is less rigid and more apt to surprise by some sudden appeal to experience in order to bear out a principle. What must strike any intelligent reader is that the writer possesses, together with a very high conception of education, a feeling for reality, a desire for balanced culture, an openness to possibilities of progress in matters educational, a progress always united to respect of past tradition."

This education was given amidst many difficulties, and with the alternations of failure and success which are the lot of all human enterprises. In 1850 the nuns had transferred the community and school from Berrymead, Acton, to Roehampton. The first Irish house at Roscrea was soon supplemented by convents at Armagh, Mount Anville, and Dublin. In 1874 a training college and an elementary school were founded at Wandsworth; a boarding school was opened at Brighton in 1877, and day-schools at Hammersmith in 1893 and at Aberdeen in 1895. The convent at Bonchurch, Isle of Wight, was founded in 1904. The Newcastle Training College came into existence in 1906, while in the preceding year the Wandsworth students migrated to what is now St. Charles's Training College, North Kensington. After two attempts at setting up boarding schools at Blackheath and Leamington, another foundation was made at Tunbridge Wells (1915). A training college at Edinburgh (1918), a boarding school at Kilgraston, Perthshire (1930), and a house of studies at Oxford (1929) have been the latest foundations.

This development has taken place side by side with the splendid work done for Catholic girlhood not only by the English teaching congregations, such as the *Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary*,[1] which for two centuries had seen successive generations of pupils pass through the Bar Convent at York, and the *Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre*, established at New Hall, Chelmsford, since 1800, but also by many other religious from abroad. Indeed, ever since 1830, when the *Faithful Companions* had begun in Somers Town their far-reaching apostolate, the work of nuns in England had developed with great rapidity. In 1845 came the *Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur*, and the same year saw the foundation of

[1] See bibliography for the lives of the foundresses of these congregations.

Mother Margaret Hallahan's Dominican convent at Coventry. 1846 was the date of Mother Connelly's arrival and the birth of her *Congregation of the Holy Child*. The *Sisters of St. Paul* came from Chartres in 1847; four years later the *Sisters of the Cross and Passion* opened their first schools. Again, six years after this, the *Nuns of the Assumption* came to Kensington Square. So the roll continues: *Sisters of Charity*, *Sisters of Mercy*, *Dames de St. André*, all came to England, while from Bruges the *Canonesses of the Lateran* returned to the land which had expelled their order nearly three centuries previously and settled at Hayward's Heath.

In a collection of essays on the Catholic Church in England since the Emancipation Bill of 1829,[1] an account is given of the work done in England by the many teaching congregations that set up schools in the second half of the nineteenth century.

At first there was but little contact between these Religious Orders, though from time to time, when necessity arose, one would help on the work of another. Thus the nuns of the Sacred Heart can never forget the encouragement and efficient help they received from Sister Mary of St. Philip,[2] when, on the point of founding the Wandsworth Training College, they were allowed to make a short stay at Mount Pleasant, which was then, as now, one of the foremost colleges in the country. Since those days a regular organisation has drawn together the teaching congregations of women. *The Association of Convent Schools*, by its annual conference and its annual summer school, provides nuns of all the Religious Orders with opportunities of learning from one another and of uniting in concerted action for the common good. The posts of president and

[1] *Catholic Emancipation, 1829–1929*, published by Longmans in 1929. Essay entitled "Religious Communities of Women," by Maud Monahan.

[2] A religious of the congregation of *Notre Dame de Namur*.

secretary are held in rotation by representatives of the Orders who are on the standing committee.

Before speaking of school life at Roehampton it will be interesting to take a glimpse into two English schools. Cheltenham, under Miss Beale, is thus described[1]: "It started merely as a school, but it has developed into something which has no counterpart in boys' education in modern times. Its nearest parallel is the Renaissance ideal of an institution which should be school and university in one. At the one end it has its Kindergarten, at the other its student working for the Higher Locals and London degrees. . . . It is a miniature educational system in itself. . . . Miss Beale had a good eye for form mistresses, but hers was the controlling spirit. Organisation with her, as with every great headmistress or headmaster, did not mean . . . sitting in an office and devising general rules which approximate to the right way of dealing with all cases but which exactly fit none. The girls at the top of the school she knew intimately, and she strove to know all. She taught and she did not merely direct teaching. Little energy was frittered away in red tape. She inspired her pupils with devotion, not unmixed with awe, commonly felt only for a sovereign. But her internal life was one of prayer and meditation. . . . In her teaching, the class caught her enthusiasm for the subject matter. . . . Her literature lessons were her chosen vehicles of revealing her views on life and conduct."

With this picture it is of interest to compare the schools founded in England in the 'sixties by the nuns of the Holy Child. The foundress, an American, by name Cornelia Connelly, had been in the early years of her conversion to the Catholic faith in close connection with the Society of

[1] See Archer's *Secondary Education in the Nineteenth Century*, chap. ix, p. 242.

the Sacred Heart in Louisiana, and had spent some time by special permission, and with a view to studying religious life, in the novitiate of the same Society at the Trinità dei Monti, Rome. The peculiar circumstances of her life, and the immediate needs of Catholic schools in England, led her advisers, and especially Cardinal Wiseman, to urge her to found a new Teaching Order in that country. At St. Leonards-on-Sea and at Mayfield in Sussex Mother Connelly established schools which to-day bear witness to the loftiness of her views and the efficiency of her methods. A member of her Order has thus described its ideals:[1]

"The educational ideal of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus is that of its foundress, who at the same time that she was consolidating her Order was laying down the lines of the education to be given in its schools. This does not mean that she elaborated any rule-of-thumb methods, or even that she organised a *system*. She left as a precious legacy to her schools an aim, an ideal, a *spirit* which, while always remaining itself, adjusts itself to the needs of the time, the locality, the individual child. Mother Connelly stressed the training of character rather than the merely instructional aspect of education. *The Book of Studies*, compiled in 1863 for the guidance of the nuns engaged in teaching, while it enters minutely into every administrative and scholastic detail of school life, shows by its very insistence on thoroughness and accuracy, and by a certain virility of tone, what was her main preoccupation in drawing up her schemes of work. Her sense of fundamental truth led her to seek in education the reality which underlies life, for which true school education is but a preparation. . . . Certain points emerge quite early, for instance,

[1] From manuscript notes kindly sent to the writer.

the bent towards higher studies, shown in an early and consistent aim to develop sixth form work, and to send girls on to the universities. Moreover, the Rule, which legislates for the further education of the nuns, admits of an interpretation enabling them also to proceed to a university. The result of this tendency is seen in the special work undertaken by the Society of the Holy Child Jesus for students of university standard, in England and elsewhere, notably at Oxford, where, as soon as the Papal dispensation was granted in 1906, provision was made for the Catholic woman student.[1]

"A second point, not unconnected with this urge towards the real and practical, is the attention given to physical culture. Organised games[2] and gymnastics were included in the curriculum at a very early stage, while the 'accomplishments' were relegated to their proper place as accessories to the main 'business' of the school. . . . From the very beginning it was designed for English girls living in England, and therefore the school has a peculiarly English stamp—the atmosphere is one of perfect freedom and simplicity . . . and it has always been possible to entrust the children with a large share of the government, much on the lines of the prefect system of the English public schools."

Brief as are these two extracts, they reveal, nevertheless, some of the special characteristics which lie at the heart of English education: the personal, vital intercourse which binds mistress and pupil, and yet respects the independence

[1] At Cherwell Edge, Oxford, the nuns of the Holy Child have a flourishing hostel for home students.

[2] It is of interest to note that in the matter of games and sports for girls the convent schools seem to have been ahead of their times. Roehampton played cricket and tennis in the 'seventies; cf. what Miss Burstall has to say in *Retrospect and Prospect*, p. 51, of the restraint imposed upon girls in high schools until almost the end of the century.

of the adolescent mind; the importance attached to physical education, the ideal of personal independent study and reading, which makes real scholarship possible for the more gifted; the measure of self-government engendering a sense of responsibility in the individual, and giving to the whole school an atmosphere of dignity, and a contact with the realities of life.

Such was the ideal which the Society of the Sacred Heart was to blend with its own tradition to form what M. Roure describes, in the extract quoted above, as a singularly lofty concept of education, rooted in truth and harmoniously blended, a practical system, open to experiment and new ideas, but steeped in a valued tradition.

One would like to study the worth of that tradition in its various manifestations; for instance, in a vigorous day school like that at Hammersmith, or in the training colleges, the forcing-ground for much that is best in womanhood.[1] But since the plan of this book requires detailed analysis of one house in each country rather than a cursory survey of many, it will be most natural to select the convent of Roehampton, the first founded as well as the centre of the English vicariate, the house of novitiate and juniorate.[2]

When Mother Barat paid a visit to her English nuns in 1844 she found them struggling against many odds at Berrymead Priory, Acton; and it was not until the school had moved to Roehampton[3] that it really began to flourish.

[1] See *The Society of the Sacred Heart*, pp. 68–74, for the very high view taken by Reverend Mother Stuart of the work of training colleges.

[2] For long all the houses in the British Isles were grouped into one vicariate with Roehampton as the centre. Since 1918 the number of the houses has grown too large for this to be possible.

[3] The house had recently been the property of Lord Ellenborough. There is an idea that the land was once monastic property, but no clear proofs have ever been obtained of this theory.

From that date onwards there was built up upon the property what may, perhaps, be called a miniature educational system. To-day the household includes not only the community with the novices and young nuns in training, but also a boarding school and an elementary school.

Many influences have mingled together to produce the atmosphere peculiar to Roehampton. The historic past of the Order may be traced in many characteristic customs or in peculiarities of vocabulary, meaningless to the uninitiated, but which link the English school to continental ones and are a witness to a living past. There is the influence of the foundress, whose personality has left its mark upon the generation of women privileged to see her raised to the altars of the Church. Everywhere one may trace the strong organising power of Reverend Mother Digby,[1] who lifted the English vicariate from its insignificant beginning on to a plane of far-reaching activity. Most potent, perhaps, of all influences is that of Reverend Mother Janet Stuart.[2] Her thoughts, her appreciations, her very personality seem inextricably bound up with the vicariate, which she governed for seventeen years. Who will ever say what Reverend Mother Stuart did for Roehampton? And yet, great as was her influence, she taught those who revered her to live without her, and even in the years of her greatest activity she gave scope for the talents and initiative of others.

Now, a school may be studied, perhaps chiefly, through

[1] Reverend Mother Mabel Digby, born in 1835, had been Superior at Marmoutier before coming to Roehampton, which she governed from 1872 to 1894. She was Superior General of the Order in the last years of her life, and had to face the suppression of the French houses at the beginning of the century. See Bibliography.

[2] The definitive biography by Maud Monahan leaves little further to be said. Reverend Mother Stuart was born at Cottesmore in 1857; she came to Roehampton in 1882; was Superior-Vicar from 1894 to 1911, Superior General from 1911 to 1914. She had travelled extensively, and knew all the houses of the Society. See Bibliography.

the personality of those who have most deeply influenced it; though in order to get a complete idea of its life and activity one must also know something of the principles by which it is guided and of the details of its daily life. These three points, then, will be considered in connection with Roehampton, and so, in the first place, let us glance at the nuns who have been most influential in making it what it is to-day. Since, therefore, both in her writings[1] and in her personal activity Reverend Mother Stuart was such a power, it is fitting to place first this sketch of her work[2] and personality from the pen of one who worked in close collaboration with her. "Life is defined sometimes as the power of self-movement, and all agree that movement of some kind is the necessary accompaniment of life. This truth seems to me to be the underlying principle of all Mother Stuart's work as an educator. Fundamentals in education are constants. All Catholics agree on that point, but there is endless possibility of progress in the application of unchanging principles to changing circumstances.

"Mother Stuart never had any sympathy with a closed system however seemingly perfect, nor with the idea that the end had been attained and that nothing more need be done. On the contrary, her own most vigorous and original mind was always bringing out 'of her treasures things new and old,' old in truth, new in the freshness of her presentment.

"Nothing was more stimulating than to hear her speak on a perfectly familiar text, such as some school regulations, which from long use might have become dry bones. At

[1] See *The Society of the Sacred Heart*, published at Roehampton, and *The Education of Catholic Girls*. Mother Stuart left much manuscript writing, some of which is published by Longmans in *Highways and Byways in the Spiritual Life*. Most of these manuscripts are at Roehampton.

[2] Notes kindly given to the writer.

her touch they sprang into life. She always went to the heart of things and the heart of things is never dull.

"The dreary platitudes which are printed in many educational reports and books on teaching make a painful contrast with her unforgettable setting of familiar truths. She was absolutely sincere in her appreciations, and had found that to be sincere intellectually one must work hard. It is so much easier to stay on the surface of things, and there to echo the catchwords of the day.

"She was no believer in the value of public examinations for children; she maintained further that few women love learning in an entirely disinterested way, but she was willing and even anxious that those who taught in the schools of the Sacred Heart should acquire the indispensable paper qualifications. When 'science' became the rage, about 1900, and it was gravely stated that the balance is one of the chief instruments for moral training, she saw to it that physical and chemical laboratories should be set up and duly used. To all the fads of the hour in the educational world she paid the attention that was indispensable and no more." Reverend Mother Stuart developed the reading room at Roehampton; she placed the responsibility of games and holidays, of charities, and in some measure of details of discipline in the hands of the elder girls. She founded the Old Girls' Association, and lent her strong support to every noble and serious enterprise.

When Mother Stuart entered at Roehampton, the mistress-general was Mother Henrietta Kerr,[1] whose

[1] Mother Henrietta Kerr was born in 1842, at Dittisham, Devonshire, and educated in Lord Henry Kerr's beautiful place at Huntlyburn, near Abbotsford. She made her noviceship at Conflans, and spent some years at the Trinità dei Monti, Rome, before she came to Roehampton as mistress-general. These notes are taken from a sketch of Mother Kerr's life published in the Roehampton *Chronicle* in May 1934. The facts are based on her published life. See Bibliography.

"home-training had fitted her in no ordinary degree for the task of forming and educating Catholic girlhood. Keeping always before her a very high standard of excellence, and knowing by experience what home-life could be at its best, Mother Kerr had all the talent, all the power of influence that are necessary in order to mould the mind and heart of a child. . . . Her children speak of her sincerity and of the amazing sense of reality experienced in coming into contact with her. She had lived too much among people of real culture not to appreciate its value, and she endeavoured to give her girls, in their busy day, time for discursive reading and intelligent conversation. She liked them to be informed of contemporary events and saw to it that they understood what was going on. She established in the school the Literary Society which, at Easter 1934, held its 206th Meeting. . . . Mother Kerr led a life so natural, so simple, so finely tempered in its heroism that even those with whom she was most closely associated only guessed half its inner meaning."

Mother Kerr was succeeded by Mother Errington, niece of Archbishop Errington, sometime co-adjutor to Cardinal Wiseman. Her influence born of very real scholarship was exercised especially upon the older girls. One of her former pupils writes:[1] "The adjective which sums up Mother Errington for me is *chivalrous*. I think that her own life ideal, and the ideal with which she tried to inspire others, is expressed in the words of Ethai the Gethite to David: 'In what place soever thou shalt be, My Lord, O King, either in death or in life, there will thy servant be.[2] I heard these words first from her, and they seem to echo through all the memories of my schooldays.

"She was a very inspiring personality and a teacher

[1] Notes given in manuscript to the writer. [2] 2 Kings xv. 21.

with the power of opening up vistas that made one long to enter into the fair realms of knowledge thus revealed. I remember particularly some lessons on Dante which made a lasting impression; and an introduction to Liberatore's works on philosophy and to Mgr. Dupanloup's writings on the education of women. Mother Errington was a good linguist perfectly familiar with French and Italian and, I think, with German. Her culture had a certain cosmopolitan quality resulting from her long visits to the Continent in her girlhood. She was interested in everything, in her own subjects and in others, such as music, in which she was not an expert. . . . She had a great gift of drawing out others, and I think it was Mother Digby who said that she could make a stone talk.

"For a person with so many gifts and such charm she was singularly self-diffident and shy. She told me that she never confronted visitors, that is the parents of the children, without a certain inward tremor, but this may have come from her realisation of her great responsibility in representing the Society of the Sacred Heart to the outside world."

After Mother Errington came Mother Marie Thérèse d'Arcy, who, brought up in a cultured Irish home, among the nine brothers of whom she was the queen, had acquired, both at home and at the convent of the Sacred Heart of Conflans, a width of outlook, a training in serious study, and a deep appreciation of the French tradition in education, sublimated, if one may so put it, by her Irish sense of humour. One of Mother d'Arcy's old pupils[1] speaks of her ideal of true womanliness: "To her, 'Woman was God's last creation and His most perfect.' She had no patience with girls who envied men. Every detail that

[1] Notes kindly given to the writer.

went to make up the perfect woman was important in her eyes; taste (hers was that of the perfect Frenchwoman, everything simple, everything perfect, everything in keeping, nothing too much); manners (stressing always simplicity as the foundation of good breeding); consideration for others, the importance of little things like answering letters. All her teaching was *concrete*, brought home by a case in point or illustrated by a story told in her inimitable way. She was afraid lest the *natural virtues* be overlooked and had a horror of unreal spirituality. Her power lay in her immense motherliness for each. . . . Self-control and cultivation of will-power she insisted upon, believing that if a girl did not take herself in hand before she was fifteen she would never really form her own character.

"Mother d'Arcy used sometimes to put before us the idea of a diptych—on the one side Our Lord, thorn-crowned and suffering, and on the other a worldly girl, thoroughly comfortable. She would then ask us what connection a pagan would see between the two if he were told that one was Christ and the other a Christian. A deep love of reality was at the root of all her teaching."

These are some of the personalities who have made Roehampton what it is. The theory which underlies the training given in the school is best expressed in Mother Stuart's *Education of Catholic Girls*. Even though to-day girls are preparing for the school certificate, for responsions, matriculation, examinations in social science or in religious knowledge, the strong bases of philosophy are laid with as much earnestness as in former times. "The importance[1] of the 'discipline' of psychology can scarcely be over-estimated. With that of Ethics it gives to the minds of women that which they most need for the happy

[1] *The Education of Catholic Girls*, p. 70.

attainment of their destiny in any sphere of life and for the fulfilment of their obligations. They must know themselves and their own powers, in order to exercise control and direction on the current of their lives."

The French writer quoted earlier in this chapter has noticed in Reverend Mother Stuart's book on education the practical spirit which seeks ever to keep the girl in touch with the realities of life while it develops every side of her personality: "Manual work[1] gives balance and harmony in the development of the growing creature. A child does not attain its full power unless every faculty is exercised in turn, and to think that hard mental work alternated with hard physical exercise will give it full and wholesome development is to ignore whole provinces of its possessions. . . . Children are proud of what they have done and made themselves. They lean upon the concrete, and to see, as the result of their efforts, something which lasts, especially something useful, as a witness to their power and skill, this is a reward in itself and needs no artificial stimulus. . . . Children will go quietly back again and again to look, without saying anything, at something they have made with their own hands, their eyes telling all that it means to them, beyond what they can express."

Training in taste has been the aim of every great educator, from Vittorino da Feltre to Rollin and the great masters of all times. "Rational principles of æsthetics,"[2] says Mother Stuart, "belong very intimately to the education of women. Their ideas of beauty, their taste in art, influence very powerfully their own lives and those of others, and may transfigure many things which are otherwise liable to fall into the commonplace and vulgar. If woman's taste is trained to choose the best, it

[1] *The Education of Catholic Girls*, pp. 82–3. [2] Ibid., p. 71.

upholds a standard which may save a generation from decadence."

Closely akin to the refinement of taste is the gentleness that comes of good manners.[1] "Is not well-instructed devotion to Our Lady and the understanding of the Church ceremonies, a school of manners in which we may learn how human intercourse may be carried on with the most perfect external expressiveness? Is not all inattention of mind to the courtesies of life, all roughness and slovenliness, all crude unconventionality which is proud of self-assertion, a 'falling from love' in seeking self? Will not the instinct of devotion and imitation teach within all those things which must otherwise be learned by painful reiteration from without; the perpetual *give up*, *give way*, *give thanks*, *make a fitting answer*, *pause*, *think of others*, *don't get excited*, *wait*, *serve*, which require watchfulness and self-sacrifice?"[2]

From a clear philosophy of mind, trained taste, and good manners should spring that serenity that is the most perfect fruit of education, the eye "made quiet by the power of harmony and the deep power of joy" which "sees into the life of things."[3] Thus, "if we want a girl to grow up to the best that a woman ought to be, it is in two things that we must establish her fundamentally, quiet of mind and firmness of will; quiet of mind equally removed from stagnation and from excitement. . . . The best minds of women are quiet, intuitive and full of intellectual sympathies."[4]

How, it may be asked, is this training, this influence to be brought to bear upon the girl of to-day? In a paper on

[1] *The Education of Catholic Girls*, p. 213.
[2] Compare above, Part I, Chap. VI, Madame de Maintenon's remarks on manners.
[3] Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey."
[4] *The Education of Catholic Girls*, p. 231.

"The Training of the Girl for Home Life," read before the Conference of Convent Schools in May 1934, a nun suggested a meeting ground for practical facts and high ideals. "Only in the training of the girl in womanliness shall we meet the needs of her nature and fit her to do her best work either in public or in private life. The concern of the woman is always with the individual and the particular, and whether she forms a home of her own or enters into the seclusion of religious life, she is deeply concerned in home-making and in home-building. . . . What we must secure (for our girls) is an inner kernel of stability and self-reliance, a power of self-adjustment. To do this, our first task is to enter imaginatively into the girl's own life. . . . More demands are going to be made on the intellectual equipment of the average woman of the future. . . . The conscience of the adolescent girl . . . has to be formed to self-government, to face the real, the definite, the concrete in personal conduct."

Something of this real, definite, and concrete may be read in the *Chronicle*, the annual publication which shows Roehampton and its sister schools at their best. From the pages of this magazine one may learn of the activities of the present pupils, their literary meetings, examinations, sports, plays, social works, and the charities kept up by the proceeds of the annual bazaars. The doings of past pupils also find a place here, the interest in settlement and hospital, in travel and study. There is an article entitled "Round the World," recording the life and doings of houses in many lands. Distinguished friends, ecclesiastics or laymen, contribute articles. Many of the special characteristics of the English schoolgirl come out in the records of occupations and interests which differ little in content from those that fill the lives of girls in every land.

The terrace at Roehampton is a place whereon to dream. Behind one, flanked by new and rambling constructions, stands the dignified country house which overlooks the spacious garden. Lawns slope down to a sheet of water beneath the trees; beyond is meadowland and, on the right, a monastic-looking tunnel leads under the road to the kitchen garden. There homely flowers grow beside the vegetables, and rambler roses make a riot of colour along the walks which lead to the cemetery or to the enclosed garden. From the terrace a vista opens right over London away to Harrow-on-the-Hill. Sounds mingle here, cars passing in the "lane," the voices of children at play, the confused roar from the great city which is so near and yet so remote from this convent home.

Chapter IV

A GERMAN BOARDING SCHOOL

"The Children of the Sacred Heart form a large family."—School rule.

THE traveller from Aix-la-Chapelle who crosses the Dutch frontier into Vaals soon comes upon a short avenue running at right angles to the main road and leading up to an old country house set in the midst of trees. This is Blumenthal, the valley of flowers, a place suggestive of Dutch painters and Flemish mystics, but essentially a German school.

Ever since its foundation in 1848 Blumenthal, secure by its position on the frontier from the vicissitudes that beset the convents in Germany in the last century, has been for close upon ninety years one of the chief German-speaking schools of the Society of the Sacred Heart, and was for several years a house of noviceship. It is, therefore, a specially suitable place in which to study the development of the tradition, which we are considering, under conditions differing somewhat from those obtaining in Latin countries.

Grosszügig and *gemütlich* are the adjectives which best describe Blumenthal, the pleasant, homely character of the establishment being visible in every aspect of its life. A ramble round the house would be the best way of proving this point. As the visitor goes through the classrooms, the dormitories, and the corridors of the old and new buildings, he cannot fail to notice the northern ideal of simple and dignified comfort, an ideal which holds so much less fascination for the Latin mind. The rooms and dormitories, spotlessly clean as in all convents, are each distinctive in arrangement or colour scheme or choice of pictures, a matter in which the German child shows singular refine-

ment of taste. The intelligent planning of the rooms, the space given for personal possessions, and the freedom to exercise individual choice all help to promote the sense of home.

The same atmosphere is found in classrooms and dining-room, in libraries, workrooms and hall, where the vases of fresh flowers, and the carefully arranged scholastic material, give a good idea of the character of the school. Here, in the laboratories, each girl has her own allotted place for experiments in physics or chemistry or biology, with shelves, bunsen burner, and apparatus marked for individual use. There, we find collections of pictures relating to art or folklore or geography. The museum is not a *dead* place, but shows signs of vigilant care, as do the aquarium and the children's gardens. The *dreijährige Frauenschule* has its pleasant quarters for cooking, laundry-work, or nursery duties, while the long row of folding-stools, each marked with its owner's name, speaks of studies taken in the homely garden.

Out of doors, once one has passed the first few flower-beds and the playing grounds immediately surrounding the house, one comes upon every variety of homestead, for the greater part of the Blumenthal land is given up to its farm. Chickens, turkeys, ducks, and geese; rabbits, sheep, cattle, and Shetland ponies, are bred upon the property, as are also the peacocks who strut upon the lawn or the majestic swans sailing upon the cool and sheltered lake.

Such an environment has its own peculiar lessons to teach to girls who get into touch with the different groups that go to make up the domestic household; the farmhands or the *Hauskinder* (young girls trained to domestic service under the care of one of the nuns); the families of gardeners or stewards whose children attend the convent elementary

school, an imposing building which harbours some four hundred Dutch children of the neighbourhood.[1]

Yet one more home-corner in Blumenthal must be mentioned as having an influence upon every growing girl. On the outskirts of the property, the *Friedhof* or cemetery, with its huge cross of grey stone, offers a last resting place to the nuns who have laboured within the convent walls. There, beside the shrine of Our Lady, *Janua Coeli*, they sleep in peace, waiting for the day when that Mother, Queen of Heaven, will open for them the gates of their eternal home.

Blumenthal has always been especially glad to welcome foreigners into its great family, making special arrangement to facilitate their study of French and German. The statistics of the school increased more or less steadily from the foundation to the eve of the Great War, when there were one hundred and forty-six girls on the list, forty-four of whom were foreigners. It is not surprising to find that in 1918, of the one hundred and fifty-eight pupils only six were foreigners. Since then the foreign girls have been as many as twenty in one year, but the number of German girls has gone down considerably both at Blumenthal and in its sister school at Pützchen in the Rhineland. This is a result of the financial crisis and of the social unrest.

Of the various types of schools for the German girl to-day, three stand out as of greatest importance[2]: the *Lyzeum*, with its three years of higher studies forming the *Oberlyzeum*, offers a cultural education by means of the

[1] The school, which has nine classes, is recognised by the Dutch Government.

[2] Mr. Kandel in *Comparative Education*, p. 756, gives statistics showing the increase in numbers of the different types of school. From 1912 to 1927, the pupils in the *Oberlyzeum* have increased from 5,742 to 6,937, those in the *Realgymnasium* from 3,011 to 8,005, those in the *Frauenschule* from 768 to 2,739.

study of religion, German, two modern foreign languages, history, geography, mathematics, natural science, drawing, music, and needlework. This type of school prepares those pupils who desire to go to the University either for the *Reifeprüfung* or for the *Abitur* examination. The second type most popular is the *Realgymnasium*, where Latin is added to the above curriculum and the studies are, on the whole, modelled upon those in the same kind of schools for boys. Thirdly, there is the *dreijährige Frauenschule* (a three-year course), an institution planned on wholly feminine lines, aiming, as the official description[1] states, at giving its pupils a practical preparation for life, but one informed by a humanistic spirit which will rise above the level of mere technical training.[2] Of the three types the Society of the Sacred Heart has so far adopted two, Blumenthal being recognised as a *Lyzeum*, with a *dreijährige Frauenschule*, while at Pützchen, the school of St. Adelheid has a higher department, or *Oberlyzeum*, from which the girls present themselves for the *Abitur* or Matriculation. Apart from this, Blumenthal has a *Haushaltungsschule* for foreigners and Pützchen the first year of the *dreijährige Frauenschule*. At the end of the *dreijährige Frauenschule* the girls take an examination, which is in its value equal to the *Abitur* of the *Oberlyzeum*.

A French school in the earliest days of its foundation, Blumenthal began to conduct its classes in German about the year 1862, at first following the French plan as far as

[1] Article in *Zentralblatt* for February 5th, 1932. The older name of Frauenoberschule is used in this article.

[2] "Die Eigenart der Frauenschule wird dadurch gekennzeichnet, das sie den Gedanken der Schulung durch das Werk und der Erziehung durch den Dienst in den Mittelpunkt ihrer Arbeit stellt. Das für sie Charakteristische ist somit die organische Verbindung gedanklicher und werklicher Arbeit und die wechselseitige Durchdringung wissenschaftlicher und praktischer Arbeitsgebiete." (Article cited above.)

it could be adapted to the needs of the German mentality and laying special stress upon the teaching of French. This is, indeed, a special feature in the schools under consideration, where the girls really master the French tongue, speaking and reading it fluently by the time they have finished their studies. The teaching is scientific, with phonetics in the lower classes, much gramophone practice, and a special system of charts, invented by one of the nuns, to develop the French inflection of voice and the intonation so utterly unnatural to the German vocal organs.

Since 1912, Blumenthal has been coming into closer contact with the general trend of national education, and now follows the suggestions or *Richtlinien*[1] issued for the guidance of German schools. After the War the girls began taking public examinations, at first externally, but since the recognition of the different departments, internally under the supervision of an academic board.

The classes of the *Lyzeum* begin with the *Sexta* (ten years old), and go up through the *Quinta*, *Quarta*, *Undertertia*, *Obertertia*, to the *Untersekunda*. After this come the three classes of the *dreijährige Frauenschule* or the *Oberlyzeum*, named in either case the *Obersekunda*, the *Unterprima*, and the *Oberprima*.

The girls leaving after the first year of *Frauenschule* get a certificate which enables them either to continue their studies in the *Oberlyzeum* or to train for such careers as teachers in nursery schools or kindergarten or for some branch of technical work.

The studies are planned on a system of correlation or *concentration*, reminiscent of Herbart, a system which, if not pushed too far, gives life and unity and family spirit to

[1] *Richtlinien für die Lehrpläne der höheren Schulen Preussens* (Weidmann, Berlin, 1925).

the classes, each of which has its own mistress. Specialists teach many subjects, such as biology, physics, chemistry, and mathematics, each being so treated as to be made an instrument for the development of power of thought and judgment, of accurate observation and patient study. The first place is, however, given to literature, good translations from Greek, Latin, Italian, and Spanish classics being read in addition to German, French, and English texts. Such reading is never done in class hours, the German girls, who are hard workers, being always ready for the independent research which will prepare them for a discussion.

Many a thoughtful and fruitful conversation will be held in a German classroom, the mistress sitting, according to custom, slightly to one side, so as not to obstruct the view of blackboard or picture from the circle of alert though quiet girls sitting each at her own movable desk or table.

The *Hausfrauenschule*, planned mainly for those who can remain in the school only one year after completing their *Untersekunda*, or for foreigners, gives a practical course in household management and child study, with the addition of some German literature and other similar subjects. The three years' course of the *dreijährige Frauenschule*,[1] however, purports to bring philosophy down not only to the coffee-house, but to the very kitchen where the coffee is prepared. It is of special interest at this time, when in every European country the curriculum of a girls' school is being reconsidered; moreover it seems to come very near to the early plans of studies of the Society of the Sacred Heart and to have much in common with the aims and syllabus of St. Cyr.

Religious teaching is centred round some definite idea;

[1] See "Die Frauenoberschule" in the *Zentralblatt für die gesamte Unterrichtsverwaltung in Preussen*, February 5th, 1932, pp. 64–9.

for instance, in one year the *Obersekunda* studied in Scripture, liturgy, and doctrine the "Christocentric" man; while the *Unterprima* were considering the "Theocentric"; and the *Oberprima*, "Mary, the Ideal of Womanhood." Other subjects are grouped under three headings :

(1) *Those that deal with housecraft*, such as dietetics, household accounts, book-keeping, cooking, housework, gardening, and needlework.

(2) *Pedagogic and social subjects*, such as hygiene, with practical work in the care of infants, home nursing, theory of education, practical work in kindergarten and junior school.

(3) *Subjects for general culture, including German literature* (again centred round a theme such as the "child in literature," or round a definite period or literary movement), also history, civics, economics, French, English, music, drawing, elementary physics and chemistry, biology to a higher degree, a surprisingly difficult course in mathematics, and finally, that essentially German subject called *Lebenskunde*,[1] which takes the place of the more abstract study of philosophy made in the French school. This study, which can be based upon scholastic philosophy and correlated with the other parts of the curriculum, has a wonderfully maturing influence upon a girl preoccupied by the great questions of the day.

In a German school, the classes are taken in the morning, there being five periods for the older girls, four for the younger, each period lasting forty-five minutes. The afternoon and evening are for study, for individual lessons, or for private work—music, drawing, or sewing. There is a break between 3.30 and 4.30 for recreation, *Vesperbrot* and a short time in chapel, while after 6.30 those who have

[1] Knowledge of life.

finished their preparation may meet in one of the work-rooms for quiet conversation or to listen in to some good music. Freedom and leisure seem an essential feature of a German school, each girl having daily some three or four hours at her own disposal.[1] It is to her advantage to work well, as examinations are strenuous indeed; the test papers are planned for a five-hour session, during which the candidate is expected to produce with the help of unlimited "rough paper" a small work of art, sometimes on only one question. Besides the written examination there is also a very thorough oral test.

The *dreijährige Frauenschule* differs thus from the *Oberlyzeum*[2] in that it gives a place to *Lebenskunde*, to child psychology, hygiene and practical household management, and does not push so far its literary, historical, and scientific subjects, all of which it studies in connection with the home.

During these three years a few weeks are given to practical work. In the first and second year the girls spend three weeks as helpers in a kindergarten and so come to have an experimental knowledge of the needs of poor parents and of their children. They also become alive to many social questions.

In the third year the girls work for three weeks on an estate, or in a hotel, a workshop, a hospital, or an orphanage, according to the career which each intends to follow. Much fruitful experience and width of outlook are hoped for as a result of these new practices.

Teachers in the *dreijährige Frauenschule* are directed to look beyond the limits of their own particular sphere, and

[1] The time is used for studies, music and needlework, under the guidance of the mistresses.

[2] Cf. *Lyzeum und Oberlyzeum*, edited by F. Cauer and Agnes Molthan (Quelle und Meyer, Leipzig).

to connect the scientific teaching with practical household duties so that all fit into an ordered system in the minds of their pupils.

The mention of teachers brings us to an important point in the organisation of the German school, and one that has a far-reaching repercussion upon the life of a religious Order. For whereas the framework of the German schools offers at present much scope for individual enterprise and shows an elasticity which makes it possible for an international Order to adapt itself to national requirements, the regulations for the appointment of teachers and for their training are fixed, immovable, and far from satisfactory to anyone, above all to an institution with a system of training all its own. Four years in a university, two years' teaching in two schools, selected by the provincial school boards who supervise and direct the work of the candidates, are the necessary preparation for the examination giving the right to the title of *Studienassessorin*, which is changed to that of *Studienrätin* as soon as a candidate has received a final appointment entitling to full salary and pension. Only a *Studienassessorin* or a *Studienrätin* may teach academic subjects, while for needlework, music, gymnastic, or technical matters diplomas are required that may only be obtained after a four or five years' course in special academy or training college.[1] It will readily be seen how such restrictions hamper the free development of an international Order, and force upon the Society of the Sacred Heart a degree of specialisation somewhat foreign to its spirit.[2] Several of the German nuns have completed the course outlined above, spending long years in almost total separation from their community, without

[1] See Kandel, *Comparative Education*, pp. 842–9.
[2] Compare above, Part II, Chap. V.

acquiring a degree of scholarship or experience that would warrant such a sacrifice, although in some cases, at least, they have carried off the highest honours in the university.[1] Many nuns with good foreign degrees, and many who are capable but not fully trained academically, are obliged to see their power run to waste, while the help of secular mistresses must perforce be called upon to meet the instant need. In these mistresses the Society of the Sacred Heart has been happy to find devoted friends and fellow labourers, whom it delights to make part of the monastic family and to treat with trust and special gratitude. In the *Konferenzzimmer* nuns and secular teachers meet at frequent intervals to discuss school matters in order to work in harmony for a common aim. One might think that a radical change in the spirit of the school would follow from the fact that each class mistress has only a few of the subjects of her form, but this is far from being the case. On the contrary, the position of the class mistress seems to be strengthened, partly because she is freed from the burden of preparing a number of different lessons, the mere physical labour of which would demand a great amount of time, partly because her children see her respected and deferred to by other teachers in all matters that refer to their form. The unity of each class is thus the richer for being more complex, while the mother idea is safeguarded, the class mistress exercising over her own children an all-embracing, ever-vigilant care.

The mentality and the general trend of work in a German classroom can often be gauged from pedagogic studies written by the *Studienreferendarinnen*, or would-be teachers,

[1] Similarly, in Holland, the nuns have presented themselves for doctorates, and have done good research work, possible only in a university, but they have had there more freedom for their training as teachers.

during their years of practical training. Two of these, drawn up by a young nun at St. Adelheid's, Pützchen, and submitted to the *Pädagogische Akademie* of Bonn, record the candidate's teaching of German in the one-year *Frauenschule*, of history and French literature in the *Unterprima*, and of history and French in the *Untertertia*.[1] In the first thesis the writer gives an account of her handling of the three classes, so different in mentality and outlook, the girls first named being practical rather than intellectual, those of the *Unterprima* being far ahead as regards maturity and power of abstract reflection of the children in the *Untertertia*. The second thesis is a study in scholastic material, that is in the textbooks, source books, newspapers, models, poems, maps, or pictures used in teaching.

The girls of the *Frauenschule*, so the writer tells us, were reading the novels *Helden des Alltags* and *Verena Stadler* by Ernst Zahn, and were interested in the questions suggested by these works: "What is a true heroine?" or, again: "Can and should a man renounce for another's sake his personal development and activity?" What is meant by "authority" and by "freedom," by "self-control" and by "sincerity," "how are the claims of self-development to be reconciled with those of life in a social community?"[2]

While the *Frauenschülerinnen* were occupied with these questions, which might have formed the basis of a conversation at St. Cyr, the pupils of the *Unterprima* were finding a meeting ground for the history and literature of the

1 "Bericht über meine Tätigkeit im Wintersemester 1931–32 an dem Internat und Oberlyzeum mit Frauenschule der Ordensfrauen vom Hl. Herzen in Pützchen bei Bonn."

And *Verwendung von Lehrmitteln im Geschichtsunterricht der UI (Neuzeit) Herbst*, 1932, Agnes Best, R.S.C.J.

2 Account given on p. 4 in the first of the two theses mentioned above.

sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in the works of art of that period. From a picture such as Verrochio's *Colleoni*, or from the architecture of palace or cathedral, the girls were led to ponder over the ideals of Renaissance or Reformation, or of the France of Louis XIV. They drew an interesting comparison between the *Courtier* of Castiglioni and some of the *Caractères* of La Bruyère. *L'honnête homme* had little appeal for them, but they were attracted by the portrait of the Frenchwoman as she is revealed in the letters of Madame de Sévigné and Madame de Maintenon. It is significant that the girls soon found the enthusiasm of their young teacher somewhat overwhelming, and asked for more leisure to read and to think for themselves, more initiative to plan their own discussions, whereas in recording this fact the mistress unconsciously gives a glimpse of the perfect intercourse she had established with her pupils by her readiness to meet their every need.[1]

From the Chronicle of St. Adelheid's,[2] a new school and therefore perhaps all the more ready to give utterance to the experiences of its fourteen years of existence, one may learn many details which seem to prove that the Society of the Sacred Heart has found little difficulty in adapting itself to all that is best in the educational movement in Germany, while preserving intact the essentials of its tradition. Indeed, the new foundation at Pützchen, modern in building and equipment, seems to have presented from the first the appearance of a school with a tradition all its own. Recruited from the children or friends of past pupils of Blumenthal, Riedenburg, or other houses of the Society of the Sacred Heart, who had long kept up in various centres

[1] Op. cit., p. 10.
[2] *Chronik von St. Adelheid*, privately printed and appearing once a year.

of Germany[1] the bond of union formed in the days of their school life, the new German house was soon a real "Convent of the Sacred Heart," whose children eagerly adopted the life they had heard about from their mothers or from their friends.

So here we may see the mingling of the old and the new. When the *Richtlinien* demand an education which shall prepare for social life, for leadership, and for the duties of a citizen, the schools of the Society of the Sacred Heart continue their age-long endeavour to make the girls who wear blue ribbons (a badge of responsibility and authority)[2] shoulder with more and more understanding the burden which this trust confers upon them. As the *Frauenschülerinnen* go about their duties in the kitchen or kindergarten, or the girls of the *Oberlyzeum* prepare their debates and their theatrical performances, one finds oneself not very far removed from the convents of the past centuries, certainly not far from the early organisation of the Society of the Sacred Heart. Nor do the more modern forms of activity imposed by the German educational authorities or by the social or religious needs clash with old modes of life, or change the spirit of the establishment. The girls at Blumenthal and at Pützchen have their study circles, their camping expeditions, their excursions, visits to theatres and operas, their swimming and their games.

It may be a matter of surprise that the Society of the Sacred Heart has not adopted the *Realgymnasium* type of school, which takes Latin as a basis and gives a classical upbringing with science and foreign languages as secondary

[1] These centres, where "old girls" meet for pious, charitable, and social gatherings, are in Berlin, Duisburg, Düsseldorf, Essen, Hamburg, Köln, Mainz, München, Münster, Neuss, Stuttgart, and Freiburg, in Germany, as well as in the convents of Holland and Austria, and in some other continental towns.

[2] See Part II, Chap. III, p. 134.

subjects. One must remember that the question of feminine education is at present most unsettled, and that an academic career depends now, not only upon passing the *abitur* examination, but also on selection for the university. The diploma of the *dreijährige Frauenschule* opens the way to posts as teachers of trades, of technical and art subjects, and for social work or household management. It also fits the pupils indirectly to train for such different careers as that of librarian or games mistress. It makes an effort to meet the great need of the day, namely to prepare women for the home, while at the same time developing their artistic and intellectual gifts, and enabling them to occupy any position in society. The more academically-minded are prepared in the *Oberlyzeum* for the university. The study of two modern languages makes the programme of this school sufficiently complete.

In Holland the Society of the Sacred Heart has two Dutch secondary schools, at The Hague and at Arnhem. The last-named has a *Lyzeum*[1] with a higher department which adds nine hours' Greek every week to the study of Dutch, English, French, German, and Latin, an impossible programme even for the hard-working Dutch girl, and one which leaves little leisure for feminine culture or for the social life so essential a part of schooldays.

As for Austria: In Riedenburg, near Bregenz, on the

[1] The official title for the *Lyzeum* is *Middelbare Schoolen voor Meisjes*, while the upper department consists of *Voorbereidender Klassen*. There are nine important *Middelbare Schoolen voor Meisjes* run by nuns in Holland: by the Sisters of Charity of Tilburg at Amsterdam; the Sisters of Notre Dame at Amersfoort; the Franciscans at Haarlem; the Sisters of Jesus and Mary at Marienbosch, at Nymegen; the Sisters of the Poor Child Jesus at Slagharen; the Canonesses of St. Augustine at Ubbergen; the Ursulines at Venray, and also at Breust, Eijsden, and, finally, the nuns of the Sacred Heart at Arnhem. These all work in close co-operation with one another, and hold regular meetings to promote their common aims.

frontier of Germany, the studies on the whole approximate in organisation and outlook to the German schools described above. Vienna and Graz have each a full gymnasium along Austrian lines with university courses in view.[1] They are hampered by narrow restrictions which affect organisation and choice of teachers. To meet this last-named difficulty, the Society of the Sacred Heart has lately opened a house of studies and hostel at Munich so that young girls and nuns aspiring to German degrees and German teaching diplomas may be grouped together to follow various courses of studies. What the future may hold for teachers in Germany no one can say to-day. One writer[2] puts it thus: "Proposals have been made for a reorganisation of the system of preparing teachers. Whether this task should be entrusted to the Universities is a question which is open to discussion. The University courses in subject-matter, it is objected, are adequate from the point of view of the research student and specialist, but are too intensive for the future teacher, and neglect entirely their use in the classroom. The Universities, on the other hand, insist that their function is to train scholars and not teachers; the courses in education are also given from the same standpoint, and are regarded as too general and not sufficiently practical in character. For these reasons it is proposed, but the discussions have not yet proceeded further, to establish separate teachers' colleges for the preparation of secondary schools . . . the preparation could be based upon a genuinely professional basis in place of the appren-

[1] In Hungary and Poland conditions for secondary schools are very much as in Germany and Austria. In Budapest the Society of the Sacred Heart has besides a boarding school a school for languages granting internal diplomas. In Poland there are three secondary schools: at Lwow, Zbylitowska-Gora, and Polska-Wies.

[2] I. L. Kandel, *Comparative Education*, p. 848.

ticeship or craftmanship training which now takes place in the schools."

Some such organisation, provided it offered scope for private initiative, would surely be welcomed by the many religious Orders which at present are striving under difficulties to meet the needs of Catholic girls in Germany, Nuns of the Order of St. Peter Fourier, Ursulines, Dominicans, Franciscans, Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo, Sisters of the Cross, Sisters of the Visitation, Sisters of the Poor Child Jesus, and many others. Under the leadership of their bishops these nuns hold conferences and issue publications[1] whose aim is to keep alive the ideals of Catholic education, and to turn to use the power and good-will they are ready to put at the disposal of their country, a power and good-will which it can hardly afford to lose.

This picture of the life and the studies in a German convent of the Sacred Heart may be taken as an illustration both of the work of nuns in Germany and of the difficulty which hampers the development of that work. This difficulty comes rather from outside sources than from the fact that an old tradition has to be adapted to modern needs.

One has but to compare the following lines of the *Richtlinien* with a parallel passage from the Society's *Plan of Studies* in order to see that such an adaptation is not difficult where freedom of organisation and scope for individual development are given to the schools. The official handbook tells us that " the teacher must never, when selecting a subject of instruction, look upon knowledge of the content of that subject as the goal at which he is aiming, but that, on the contrary, he must consider what faculty of the child will

[1] E.g. *Die Katolische Frauenbildung im Deutschen Volke*, for Catholic women teachers.

be developed and educated by that study, and especially whether it will promote independence of judgment, of taste, of imagination, and of will."[1] With these lines from the Society's *Plan of Studies* we may compare: "Education is a work of progressive development. It assists the inborn capacities of the child in their earliest efforts, enlarges their field of action and strengthens them. It stimulates the activities of the soul, inspiring enthusiasm for great things, and in general it may be said to bring about that harmonious unfolding of nature which is favourable to the action of grace."[2]

Varied means of education may be adopted by the teacher who keeps in mind this basic principle. "The plan which aims at education rather than instruction gives the first place to the study of letters, that is, to history, literature, and the arts; for it values especially that literary culture which has trained so many great minds in the past.

"It does not, however, neglect the practical questions of modern life, nor pass by the scientific discoveries which are so materially changing our world to-day, nor again can it remain ignorant of those social questions with which the women of to-morrow must be acquainted if their influence is to be effectually exercised upon society."

[1] *Richtlinien*, the 1925 edition.

[2] *Plan of Studies for the Boarding Schools of the Society of the Sacred Heart*, 1922 edition. Section I, quoted above, Part II, Chap. VI, p. 175.

Chapter V

IN SPAIN AND ITALY

"All the system converges to this, to give personal worth to each child, worth of character, strength of principles, anchorage in faith."[1]

The history of the convents of the Sacred Heart in Italy is an interesting and eventful one. Encouraged by the patronage of King Charles-Felix of Sardinia, Madame Barat opened a house in Turin in 1823, and the next twenty years saw many other schools founded at Pignerol, Sant' Elpidio, Genoa, Parma, Padua; picturesque accounts of the schools, of the surprise visits of Queen Marie-Christine at Turin, and of the interests and enterprises of the girls, are given in the lives of Mother Barat, Mother du Rousier, Mother Tommasini.[2] The revolution of 1848 swept these schools away, but they have their successors to-day, at Padua, Turin, Florence, Venice, Naples, not to speak of the Sicilian schools at Palermo and Catania.

In Rome, the convents of the Sacred Heart were spared the calamity of 1848. The first to be founded was that of the Trinità dei Monti, in an old monastery situated on the Pincio and offered to the Society of the Sacred Heart by Pope Leo XII in 1828. This house, which so often has received the visit of Pope and Cardinal, is dear to every child of the Sacred Heart on account of a fresco of the Madonna, Mary, under the title of *Mater Admirabilis*, a shrine which, since the picture was painted in 1844, has become, as it were, a centre of spiritual life and devotion.[3]

Other convents were subsequently founded in Rome, notably that of the Villa Lante, on the Janiculum, and,

[1] J. E. Stuart, *The Society of the Sacred Heart*, p. 79.

[2] See Bibliography.

[3] See Epilogue.

more recently, the Mother House, which since 1922 has had its home in the Via Nomentana.

The first foundation in Spain was made at Sarriá, near Barcelona, in 1846, and soon there were convents of the Sacred Heart in Madrid, Seville, Saragossa, Bilbao, Barcelona and other cities. At first the education given in these two Latin countries, and especially in Spain, tended to run chiefly upon French lines, for parents were well satisfied with the Catholic and feminine tradition brought to their girls from France. There was always, however, something characteristic of the national mentality in the atmosphere, the spirit and tone of the schools. For example, there long prevailed in both countries the tradition which kept the Italian and Spanish convent-schoolgirl in almost monastic seclusion, allowing her but short holidays every year.[1] As is natural, however, the schools have now adapted themselves completely to the national educational system and to the national outlook.

There are many points of view from which to consider the schoolgirl in Latin lands.[2] The recent developments of the Italian and Spanish scholastic systems, with their somewhat academic spirit, in themselves offer an interesting study. How, one may ask, will a tradition of distinctively feminine education adapt itself to this *régime*? One might draw picturesque contrasts between Spanish and Italian customs, and try to trace the real divergences of character that exist side by side with much similarity. There is, however, a special significance in studying, in the setting of the Italian and Spanish school world, the principles of Christian

[1] See *La Educación Feminina*, Padre Ruiz Amado, S.J. The author comments unfavourably on the tendency to adopt French methods and French customs in education.

[2] This chapter was written before the outbreak of the present disturbances in Spain, July 1936.

education, so lately given to the world by His Holiness Pope Pius XI.[1] From this point of view, then, we will look upon the schoolgirl of Latin lands.

In this authoritative definition of Christian principles we notice at once a most striking feature of the Holy Father's concept of education, namely its wholeness. For him education takes in " man whole and entire, soul united to body in unity of nature with all his faculties natural and supernatural such as right reason and revelation show him to be."[2] Now, there is no more distinctive mark of the Catholic child in Latin countries than this wholeness of outlook and character shown in an ever-fresh spontaneity, in a frank and outspoken piety, in an ardent and enthusiastic devotion to a chosen cause.

In a book entitled *Englishman, Frenchman, and Spaniard*, Madariaga describes this characteristic of the Spanish race, in terms which might also be applied to the Italian. Calling the Spaniard *the man of passion*, in contradistinction to the Englishman, *the man of action*, and the Frenchman, *the man of thought*, he says : " When the man of passion acts, he enters into action with his whole person . . . the Spaniard is spontaneous. That is why he gives an impression of being an all-round man which we do not find either in the Englishman, entrenched behind the impassable barrier of his self-control, or in the Frenchman, limited within his intellect as within a laboratory. . . . Wholeness! We are already in the realm of the absolute . . . this man of passion is at every moment present with his whole self wherever he is. . . ."[3]

From this completeness or *oneness* results a " humanism

[1] See the Encyclical *Divini Illius Magistri*, 1929.
[2] English translation, p. 28.
[3] Madariaga, op. cit., pp. 42, 46.

which provides the root of that personalism which has been so often observed in Spain. The importance of personal contacts is well known wherever people of the Spanish race are concerned—whether the question in debate is a trivial affair or the most important business, a relation from man to man is indispensable if results are to be obtained."[1]

To anyone looking through the review *Lumen et Vinculum*, in which the Italian convents enshrine their common interests and the history of their little world of school, the characteristics described by Madariaga are plainly visible even from the table of contents. To take one number as an example,[2] we find: a character study of St. Dominic, followed by a spirited biography of an Italian nun of the Sacred Heart, Mother Tommasini, missioner and pioneer; a dissertation on a painting by Giorgione; accounts of travels; an article on woman's life-work and the fountain of her spiritual life; psychological studies on "personality" and "child-management"; a discussion on some musical instruments; and, finally, varied descriptions of the doings of some six or eight schools. All these topics and the chronicles of examinations, entertainments, literary academies, social gatherings, and other enterprises seem to be linked up and systematised, while they are interfused by a keen spirit of personal interest which gives them life.

If we turn back to the encyclical on the Christian education of youth, we shall find that a second principle enunciated by the Holy Father is the danger of that spirit of "naturalism" which ignores the need of mental and moral discipline and places an unbounded trust in human

[1] Madariaga, p. 47.
[2] Number for May–August, 1935.

nature. This "pedagogic naturalism," says the Pope, "which in any way excludes or weakens supernatural Christian formation in the teaching of youth, is false ... Such, generally speaking, are those modern systems bearing various names which appeal to an unrestrained freedom on the part of the child, and which diminish or even suppress the teacher's authority and action, attributing to the child an exclusive primacy of initiative, and an activity independent of any higher law, natural or divine, in the work of education."[1] In this connection the Pope speaks of the dangers of co-education, so common in the *State* schools of Spain and Italy, and claims that the two sexes "are destined to complement each other in the family and in society, precisely because of their differences, which therefore ought to be maintained and encouraged, during their years of formation, with the necessary distinction and corresponding separation, according to age and circumstances."[2]

It need hardly be said that convent education in Latin countries, as in other lands, is in full agreement with this teaching, but what must here be emphasised is that the Spanish and the Italian schoolgirl are generally subjected to a more rigid discipline than is an English or German girl, and, moreover, that this discipline is not as a rule considered irksome. The strong personality and ardent temperament of the Latin races take kindly to strict regulations and long hours of study, keeping their sunny light-heartedness, their reverent yet childlike attitude to authority, their real sense of home. In the convent, as with their parents the children feel secure in "the Church, the great family of Christ."[3] They have been taught from their childhood that "this educational environment of the Church embraces

[1] Op. cit., p. 29. [2] Ibid., p. 33. [3] Ibid., p. 36.

the Sacraments, divinely efficacious means of grace, the sacred ritual, so wonderfully instructive, and the material fabric of her churches whose liturgy and art have an immense educational value."[1] They have learned that the school is by its very nature subsidiary and complementary to the Church.[2] Hence we may read in *Lumen et Vinculum* and in its Spanish counterpart, *Mater Admirabilis*, of the inter-connection of piety and recreation, the simple, child-like celebrations of feast-days with their processions, their religious ritual and drama. In Spain, for instance, the Holy Child is welcomed at Christmas time with castanets and drums, and with charming *villancicos*. In Holy Week the curious drama of the "Supper at Bethany" commemorates the Gospel story while it relieves the poor. The helpfulness and spirit of self-sacrifice of the children is called out readily by the needs of the Church in pagan lands, and for the missions they are always ready to work and to give generously.

Religion does, indeed, permeate every aspect of life, but not to cramp or narrow it. "The scope and aim of Christian education," says the Holy Father, ". . . appears to the worldly as an abstraction, or rather as something that cannot be attained without the suppression or dwarfing of the natural faculties, and without a renunciation of the activities of the present life, and hence it seems to be inimical to social life and temporal prosperity, and contrary to all progress, in letters, arts and sciences, and to all other elements of civilisation."[3] To this personal criticism the Pope interposes the denial made years ago by Tertullian to the pagans of his day: "We are living in the world with you; we do not shun your forum, your markets, your baths, your shops, your factories, your stables, your places of

[1] Op. cit., p. 36. [2] Ibid., p. 37. [3] Ibid., p. 46.

business and traffic." In their own modest degrees the Children of the Sacred Heart might echo these words, for they live their life in harmony with the scholastic and social needs of the day. An Italian or a Spanish school will be found to adapt its traditions without any loss of essential elements to new programmes and to government requirements. Thus in Italy each boarding school has, in addition to the five elementary classes, the five classes of the *Gymnasium*, and three classes of the *Liceo* or *Corso di perfezionamento*. In the *Gymnasium* and the *Liceo* the subjects taught are Italian, history, literature, art, mathematics, geography, French, Latin, and Greek. The *Corso di perfezionamento* includes no Latin or Greek or mathematics, and instead offers courses in philosophy, in housewifery, needlework, and advanced art. The *Liceo* is the necessary preparation for entrance to the university, and its classes, as well as those of the *Gymnasium*, can only be taught by persons with the "Laura" or university degree.[1]

Of late years Italian girls are preparing themselves more generally to embrace careers, namely, teaching, the law, commerce, nursing, secretaryships. A hostel opened in the University of Milan by the nuns of the Sacred Heart offers to old pupils, as well as to the nuns themselves, the means of pursuing their studies in a familiar environment. The pressure arising from outside competition in the school examinations and from a new and somewhat unnatural movement towards university careers, has a tendency to trouble the peaceful atmosphere of school-life. So too, perhaps, have the claims of the *giovane Italiane*, or Fascist youth movement, to which all school-girls must belong.

[1] The Society of the Sacred Heart has not adopted the other type of secondary school, namely, the *Istituto tecnico*, because its programme is somewhat too narrow and unlike the traditional system of the Order.

Certain it is that Italian children work very hard, having classes from 9 until 4 o'clock each day, with very little break, and then a long period of homework in the evening. Indeed, *Lumen et Vinculum* speaks of successes in examinations with a note of enthusiasm for study somewhat foreign to English ears!

In Spain the nuns of the Sacred Heart, like the *Esclavas del Sagrado Corazón*, the *Teresas*, and several other congregations, have adapted their programmes to the fluctuating requirements of the State, the inconsistencies and exigencies of which are well described in an article of *Les Etudes* for August 5th, 1930. Since the proclamation of the republic in April 1931 gave the vote to women, there has resulted an almost feverish rush for diplomas, the nuns themselves having had to seek in the university for degrees that will allow them to carry on their schools. While hardly yet severed from the effects of prolonged indifference to higher studies, the women of Spain are making, in the face of bitter anti-clericalism, an effort which is truly splendid. Feminine studies in Spain are, at present, overwhelmingly academic, consisting of learning by heart a certain number of textbooks. In a country which can look back to a Vives, with his splendid humanistic tradition of feminine culture, this state of things is, in very truth, unnatural, and cannot last long. The Spanish girl likes speculative ideas and deductive reasoning, she takes kindly to philosophical abstractions but needs to think more deeply. Humanism combined with a contact with the realities of life, in other words an education planned upon truly feminine lines, will surely give anchorage in a world of trouble.

A number of girls study at present for *Bachillerato* or *Comercio*. The latter is a business training and the former is something like our matriculation. Many take up teach-

ing as a profession, and, although there is the special examination called *Maestra*, the candidate who holds the *Bachillerato* is exempt from some of the subjects. Girls who go to the universities take a degree in *Ciencias* or *Letras*, corresponding to our B.A. or B.Sc. In general, there is much unrest, in the midst of which convent life, with its strong traditions, quiet routine, and permanent scale of values, ought to be a pacifying influence.

It is not only in matters academic that the Latin countries put their pupils into contact with life. In his encyclical Pope Pius XI asks: "Who is the noblest and most useful of citizens?" and he shows how the true Christian has "in every way ennobled and benefited human society."[1] In this period of transition and rapid development for the women of Latin lands one is tempted to say that the *growing point* of their intellectual and moral life is their interest in social science. The *Diario de Barcelona* for July 5th, 1929, has a stirring article on Joaquina Cunill, an old child of the Sacred Heart, well known for her vigorous and well-organised social work; while the number of *Lumen et Vinculum*, cited above, speaks of the achievement of Teresa Zilli Mercurio, who, in and round about Venice, did such intelligent pioneer work in the service of the poor. Social study clubs, discussions, and conferences are given a place of honour in the life of the schoolgirls as well as in that of past pupils, both in Spain and Italy. Girls are anxious to qualify themselves for this work, and also for that of teaching Catechism in needy parishes.

Many and varied are the forms taken by Catholic social action, from relief of the necessitous to the fight for the schools, but greatest of all, perhaps, is the maintenance of a

[1] Encyclical, English translation, p. 47.

high ideal of womanhood in a world of change and decay. "The fruits of education," says the Holy Father, "derive their price and value from the supernatural virtue and life in Christ, which Christian education forms and develops in man."[1] There is no nobler model, no higher ideal of that "life in Christ," than that given by His Mother, Mary, the Madonna, revered and cherished by every Catholic girl as the epitome of all that she holds dear and sacred, the Queen, the Mother, the guide of her life. In the cloister of the Trinità dei Monti in Rome the Society of the Sacred Heart has, as has been said, its own shrine to Our Lady.[2] But Mary is enshrined in the life and heart and conduct of every child of the Sacred Heart all over the world, as she is in the heart of every Catholic child. This influence more than any other gives personal worth of character, strengthens principles, anchors the soul in faith.

[1] Encyclical, English Translation, p. 48. [2] See Epilogue.

Chapter VI

A TRAINING COLLEGE IN PERU

"There are some for whom they are allowed to have a special attraction, namely the children of the poor."[1]

FROM *La Ciudad de los Reyes del Perú*, about the year 1870, there came an invitation to the Society of the Sacred Heart to found schools, but especially a training college on the model of the one they had already established in Chile.[2] The work was eagerly taken up by the Order, for the training college which educates a picked body of students, whom earnestness of purpose and sense of vocation make peculiarly responsive, puts the teachers directly and indirectly into contact with the poor; each lecturer seeing in the students not isolated units but the shaping influence that will be exerted upon thousands of lives. Thus the training college may be said to be a power-house of moral, intellectual, and social forces.

It was Don Manuel Pardo, President of the Republic of Peru, who was mainly instrumental in calling the nuns to Lima, and in establishing them in the old Jesuit college of San Pedro, at that time Government property. The ancient residence, with its impressive church, its carvings in stone and wood, its long cloisters and sunny *patios* where lilies bloom in tropical loveliness, seemed to bear about it spiritual associations dating back to the sixteenth century, and was truly a fitting place for a home of learning in a Latin land.[3]

[1] *Constitutions of the Society of the Sacred Heart.*

[2] This training college was founded by Reverend Mother du Rousier in 1853, at the request of the President of the Republic of Chile, Don Manuel Montt. It was the first established for girls in Chile.

[3] San Pedro was never closed down during the various political vicissitudes through which it has passed since the establishment of the training college, a good fortune which the other colleges did not share.

In Peru, indeed, as in Spain and Italy and in Chile, the religious were to find the open and unaffected piety, the practical and singularly refined ideal of womanhood, which engendered, maybe, a certain lack of interest in worldly careers, but still kept a natural appreciation of all things literary. Accustomed to view things in the light of eternity, the people of a Latin country are often ready to surround monastic life with a radiance which gives them confidence in religious teachers, and makes them set value on the seclusion of a nun's life. Moreover, the Peruvians, descended from the finest flower of Spanish chivalry, had kept in race and language much that was noblest in the Golden Age of Spain, so that the whole country, and Lima in particular, still bore a stamp of lofty spirit and daring outlook reminiscent of the Court of the Viceroys. Much ignorance there certainly was among the women, but there were splendid possibilities. Artistic, intelligent, deeply religious, and responsive to every noble appeal, the Peruvian girls, in spite of a natural weakness of constitution fostered by the climate, soon proved themselves apt subjects for training.[1]

The first twenty years of the convent's existence were, however, years of trouble and slow progress. The war with Chile was followed by political unrest which rendered Government support unstable. The boarding and day schools seem to have been tolerably successful, but the training college, the chief object of the foundation, suffered markedly from the social conditions. The college records

[1] The annals of the college, especially since 1900, do not make such dreary reading as the accounts of our own training colleges in England at the end of the last century. Though there were plenty of difficulties there was, apparently, nothing of the dismal atmosphere which is conveyed, for instance, in the chapter on "The Work of the Training Colleges, 1860–1900," in R. W. Rich's very able work entitled *The Training of Teachers in England and Wales during the Nineteenth Century.*

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for 1881 and 1882 state that many ex-students were without posts; there were only ten students in residence, and the examinations, which were supposed to be held in the presence of the Director of Education and a competent examining body, were entrusted to a single inspector. The students, relegated to a corner of the house, with little help in the way of books or equipment, vegetated for some years more. In 1888 the number rose to twenty-five, and it was noted that the old students were beginning to send in candidates of their own training who showed themselves to be much better prepared than their predecessors. In the last years of the century the students numbered about fifty, and in 1902 Reverend Mother Jackson, an Englishwoman who had witnessed in England the work done at the Wandsworth Training College, went out to South America. Already, the year previously, Reverend Mother Stuart had visited Lima, and her sympathies were roused by the struggling institution. First the boarding school, and later the day school, were transferred elsewhere, and finally a religious fully trained, and conversant with English training college methods, was sent from Roehampton to direct the studies of the girls now grown to a hundred in number.

Meanwhile friends in the Government gave help as steadily as political circumstances would permit. After the period of office of Don Manuel Pardo and of General Mariano Ignacio Prado, their excellencies Don Manuel Candamo and Don José Pardo (son of the former President) continued to further the interests of the college, as did, later, President Leguia. Successive Directors of Education, such as Dr. Giesecke, and inspectors, especially Dr. Raymundo Morales, gave advice and support, while the number of scholarships (*becas*) rose to 130, and help was

given towards enlarging the building and equipping class-rooms and laboratories. A recent visitor could with truth say of the college[1]: "It is a model of perfect installation. Every branch of study has its own room, even music and geometry, the last having ingenious models to illustrate the theorems. There are laboratories for physics and chemistry as well as a remarkably well-equipped room for anatomy, a complete installation for the study of radiography and another for experimental psychology. One can see that the Peruvian Government intends its training college to be well set up. The historical museum leaves one in admiration of the students' work. Side by side with native porcelain found in excavations can be seen the models made by these future teachers. They have a most graphic model of Peru for their geographical teaching. On an orographical map showing the elevation of the different regions they have all the productions of the soil, the trees of the forest standing 13 cm. high. There one may see bananas, maize, cotton, as well as the animals and minerals, the petrol mines being represented by little barrels."

The Demonstration School, run by former students, is equally well equipped; here a *puppet show*, there a paradise of a *kindergarten*, there again a *project* in full swing or the schedules and assignments of the *Dalton method*, show that the mistresses are ready to try experiments and to keep themselves abreast of the time.

The handwork of the Peruvian students has something of genius about it, for talent comes to them as an inheritance whether they are descended from Spanish ancestors or, as is the case with some of the girls, from the Incas. Beautiful embroidery, basketry, modelling, oil-painting, metal-work,

[1] See *En Famille* for January 1933, p. 17. Account of Reverend Mother Symon's visit, published in the periodical of the Belgian vicariate.

and other crafts claim much of the leisure time of these students, whom the excessive heat cuts off from sports or violent exercise. All these arts are singularly helpful in the schools.

In spite of the fact that many girls enter college with only the rudimentary education of far-distant provinces, they maintain a high standard in their literary and dramatic societies, and some of the past pupils write with ease and distinction. The present headmistress of the College Demonstration School, or *Centro de Aplicación*, has published two well-written pieces of research work,[1] and is known for her literary gifts and especially for her poetry.

The progress of the training college at San Pedro, now called the *Instituto Pedagógico Nacional de Mujeres* since the recent addition of a senior department for university graduates training to teach in secondary schools, has been encouraged by the founding of certain prizes such as the *Premio de Honor*, which the college owes to the late Don Javier Prado; the *Premio de Pedagogía*, presented by Dr. Peréz Figuerola; the *Premio de Virtud*, the gift of the Chinese Legation. But one of the most substantial helps received by the nuns consists in the tactful and appreciative arrangements which are made for them by university authorities, who enable the members of the college staff to pursue their academic training and get all necessary qualifications without breaking through their own traditional mode of life. Thanks to this kind help, degrees and doctorates have been obtained by the nuns, who form practically the whole staff of the college. The standard of their work may be

[1] *La Enseñanza del Castellano en la Escuela Primaria*, Señorita Maria Villalva Oliva, 1927, presented to the *Consejo Nacional de Enseñanza* and *La Educación de los Niños Anormales*, written for the 6th Pan-American Congress on Child Education.

judged by the following letter from Doctor Mariano Ignacio Prado y Ugarteche,[1] Dean of the Faculty of Jurisprudence and Professor of Law in the University of San Marcos: "Family antecedents have made me able to appreciate the work of the Society of the Sacred Heart, and my profession has put me into contact with the students who enter the university. I am, therefore, in a position to testify that the education given by that institute is inspired throughout by the most modern principles, and that it maintains at the same time lofty ideals. Old pupils of the college are now at the head of all social and cultural enterprises." This praise is endorsed by Doctor Aurelio Gamarro Hernández, President of the Board of Examinations for the last twenty-five years: "The Training College is the best educational establishment for women in Peru; and so it must be, for the Religious of the Sacred Heart are a picked body of teachers. . . . The merit of their work is acknowledged as much for its inner value as for its efficient and far-reaching character."[2]

Students enter San Pedro at about the age of fifteen, for the space of five years, the first three of which are, on the whole, dedicated to the completion of their secondary education, while the last two are occupied chiefly with professional studies and practical training in teaching. The intensity, the sense of vocation, the high moral purpose of the girls, are fostered by their environment, and when one considers that San Pedro was for long the only residential training college for Peruvian women, that it has now on active service some 750 teachers, of whom about 144 are headmistresses, that these have under them about 40,000 children, and that, in addition, there are a number of past students teaching in the secondary schools

[1] From copies of letters sent from San Pedro. [2] Ibid.

of Peru, one realises with how much truth a training college is termed " a power-house."

To future teachers destined to shape the lives of a rising generation, for whose sympathies and votes battle is being done between Communism and sound social principles, between licence and the dictates of morality, a great gift is anchorage, and a refuge in times of troubled thoughts. Not only to its pupils past and present, but also to an association which includes uncertified teachers, *La Sociedad de Maestras*, San Pedro offers the help of retreats, conferences, meetings, and its own periodical *Irradiación*. Thus is given a sense of solidarity, fittingly symbolised in an offering lately made by the old students to a representative of the Mother-General. On a map of Peru were marked the towns which possessed schools taught by them, and dots showed how many old students of San Pedro were in each locality. Running all over the map these little dots seemed to link one place with another, and with their starting-point in Lima.

In an article " En Pos del Ideal,"[1] written for the centenary publication entitled *Escuela Normal de Preceptoras* (a most inspiring volume which reveals much of the thoughts and ways of life at San Pedro), one can feel the intensity and the well-directed activity fostered by the college. The curriculum of a training college seems, indeed, to offer special opportunities to girls. There is a singularly formative influence in the study of psychology and education, of biology and hygiene, of history, literature, nature study, and art, at an age when power of thought is maturing and a serious purpose in life has been formed.[2]

[1] By Acacia Menacho C.

[2] Mr. Rich, in his book *The Training of Teachers in England and Wales during the Nineteenth Century*, complains: " To-day what is, perhaps, most conspicuously absent is the philosophical outlook on education. . . . Unfortunately, in too many

The girls at San Pedro all learn English, and the fact that there are in the community nuns from many European countries gives an international spirit to the college, a spirit which, backed by enthusiastic Catholicism, makes for width of thought. Nor are national interests neglected in a land so full of history and of present wonders. The collections of medals [1] and other antiquities betray the interest in the past, while in the laboratories and nature study rooms one can see evidences that the girls are keeping themselves informed of the progress in electricity so specially developed in their country. They study the different ways of mining gold; they are intent upon the habits of their native llama, and upon the development of quinine, or they record notes of the *Yaravi*, played by Indians on the melancholy *quena*.

Activities within and without the college are the fruit of these many-sided interests. There is, of course, the congregation of the Children of Mary. Next in importance are the associations which deal with social work. San Pedro is the centre of Catholic Action. Its most important work, which is known by the name of *El Patronato*, was founded in 1917.

El Patronato [2] is divided into four sections, all aiming at giving help to adolescents, the first being occupied with those children who are obliged to seek some remunerative work immediately on leaving the elementary schools. *El Patronato* makes it its business to see that the positions are suitable, and it welcomes the young girls on alternate Sundays in small groups at San Pedro. There, every

instances, the training college is too much like a superior secondary school, and fails in opening the minds of its students to the broad vistas of educational thought," p. 157.

[1] See *En Famille* for January 1933, p. 17. Reverend Mother Symon's visit to Lima.

[2] Details sent to the writer from the training college.

group finds a *madrina*, or "godmother," ready to take an active interest in its welfare.

The second section deals with the children who wish to continue their education in normal schools, commercial colleges, schools of medicine, nursing, domestic science, and other technical branches. It helps to place the candidates according to their abilities and to find the necessary fees. Members of this division meet their "godmothers" once a month.

The third section is composed of adolescents who, having passed through their period of training, are now facing the difficulties of a new life; while the fourth, which represents the devotional side of *El Patronato*, is known as the sodality of *Mater Admirabilis*,[1] and is open to members of each of the other three sections. It counts within its ranks typists, secretaries, nurses, to whom it gives help in the discharge of religious duties as well as relaxation by means of social gatherings. There is a yearly retreat for *El Patronato*.

The old pupils of San Pedro take especial interest in the National School for Nursing, founded by a Sister of Charity, once a pupil of the training college. They also support a bazaar founded in Lima under the title of Feminine Industry, in which are sold at moderate prices every class of artistic handwork. The object of this bazaar is to give remunerative employment to ladies who are in reduced circumstances and who wish to work in the privacy of their homes.

Finally, one must mention the *Obra de la Buena Lectura*, less well known but fruitful in good results. It consists of two Catholic lending libraries in Barranco and Magdelena Vieja, suburbs of Lima.

[1] See Epilogue.

It is, however, chiefly by their own daily work among the children of Peru that the old pupils of San Pedro must be judged. All over the country, in junior, senior, and secondary schools, they come under the supervision of the educational authorities, for all these schools are dependent on the Peruvian Board of Education. The confidence put in them is the best proof that they have established the reputation of their college, though these words of Dr. Juan Bautista de Lavalle, Professor in the University of San Marcos and member of the Spanish Academy, may be added as proof: "San Pedro is a wonderful centre of Catholic feminine education whose influence extends over thousands of families and schools in Peru. . . . The teachers formed in the Pedagogical Institute and the young girls that come from the schools (of the Society of the Sacred Heart) show every day, each in her own particular sphere, a spiritual strength which enables them to meet with dignity and elevation of mind the many difficulties of their life."

As illustrating the confidence placed in the old pupils one may instance the fact that three training colleges for elementary teachers, which have quite lately been founded in Arequipa, Huancayo, and Ayacucho to supplement the work of San Pedro, have all been entrusted to headmistresses drawn from that college, and are also staffed by old pupils. Moreover, after the evacuation of Tacna by the Chilians, when the long-mourned-for province was returned to Peru, it was to ex-students of San Pedro that were entrusted the posts of teachers in the *Colegio Nacional de Mujeres*. As the Chilians had spared nothing to win over the youth of the country to sentiments of patriotism in their regard, so now the new headmistress and her staff had to inculcate the love of the ancient fatherland which the

children had not learned to revere. So great was the success of the establishment that before long it was allowed to open a *Sección Normal Anexa*, on the model of the three other colleges mentioned above.

Thus, directly or indirectly, the Society of the Sacred Heart exerts its influence upon all the elementary schools of Peru, and, when one sees the magnitude of the work achieved, one realises, on the one hand, the advantage to the Order of working under a wide-minded and sympathetic authority; and, on the other, how much benefit an educational authority may derive by granting to a voluntary body a reasonable amount of freedom. By allowing the training college in Lima to extend its course of training over a sufficient length of time; by affording facilities to the nuns to go through their training according to their own system, and by generous financial help, the Peruvian Government has secured to itself the services it has learned to appreciate.

In a recent volume[1] Mr. Benjamin Kidd has established by an interesting line of argument the thesis that the influence of woman's mentality will be the leading feature in the next phase of social evolution. "The idealism of women . . . enables them," he considers, "to remain steadfast to aims which can only be realised in the remote future, and to resist the allurements of temporary and individual gains. If this prediction is fulfilled, it will probably be when the present period of transition in woman's development has come to an end, and when a new and wider outlook is combined with the revival of certain womanly qualities temporarily submerged. The special fitness of the young

[1] Quoted in an essay entitled "Aim and Outlook of the Secondary Education of Girls," by Charlotte Ainslie, Headmistress of George Watson's Ladies' College, Edinburgh, p. 112 of *Problems of National Education*, edited by John Clarke.

women of the present day to meet times of stress and strain must have struck all close observers. They have strength, initiative, and devotion. It is, however, of the first importance that they should take a serious and intelligent view of their future responsibilities, and they should not be led away by party catchwords or by fanatical aphorisms."

It is no wonder, then, that the nuns of the Sacred Heart look upon work in a training college as one of the most important tasks that can be entrusted to them, whether it be in the free and stimulating conditions offered by Peru, or in the English and Scottish colleges, or in Spain, in America, or Japan.

Much might be said of St. Charles's College, founded at Wandsworth in the year that the nuns of the Sacred Heart went to Peru, and afterwards transferred to North Kensington. An interesting comparison might be drawn between its activities [1] and those of its Spanish-speaking counterpart. Or again, it would be profitable to take a glance into St. Mary's College at Newcastle, with its great population in the junior, senior, and secondary schools attached to the same convent; or into the more recently founded College of Craiglockhart, Edinburgh, with its many activities and cultural interests, both within and without its college walls.[2]

Truly, as say the Peruvian students: "The Training College is a life-giving work, for it is a work of movement, action, striving, a continual upward effort towards perfection; a most noble and consoling work, which, overstepping the limits of its duties, gives to the whole Peruvian Territory

[1] See an article by the writer, "Catholic Activities at St. Charles's College," published in the *Chronicle* (the magazine of the Roehampton vicariate) in May 1934.

[2] These are recorded in *The Buckle*, the College Magazine.

the life-giving sap of a solid education, the beneficent light of knowledge and of sound principles of morality and virtue." [1]

[1] "He aquí porque la Escuela Normal es *Obra de Vida*, porque ella es movimiento, acción, lucha, impulso siempre ascendente de perfeccionamiento continuo; obra grande y consoladora que, saliendo de les límites de su recinto, lleva a todo el territorio peruano la savia vital de una educación sólida, las luces bienhechoras de la ciencia y de los más sanos principios de la moral y de la virtud." From an article entitled "Obra de Vida," written by Señorita Maria Rosario Araoz (formerly headmistress of the *Colegio Nacional de Mujeres, in Tacna*), in the *Centenary Album of the Training College of San Pedro.*

Chapter VII

IN AN EASTERN SETTING

"Our education has for its aim . . . the complete and harmonious development of a woman's gifts; . . . its details have been planned in the hope that the children may through them come to understand the excellence of self-restraint and the loveliness of perfect service." [1]

"THE labours of working among intelligent people anxious to learn in what religion they can best save their souls," wrote St. Francis Xavier in 1552,[2] "bring with them immense satisfaction," while over 360 years later Reverend Mother Stuart could write about these same people: "The Japanese have the idea deep in their mental life of the need of *a way*, they are so fitted by much in their history and their instinct for symbolism to understand many things which only find their realisation in the knowledge of the Way, the Truth and the Life. They are in their gifts, aspirations and capabilities as they were when St. Francis Xavier knew and loved them." [3]

It is to bring this people still walking in Shintoism, "the way of the gods," knowledge of another *Way* more fitted to satisfy their aspirations, their devotion to duty, their ideals of beauty, of service, of friendship, and of perfect courtesy, that the Catholic Church has been sending out her Teaching Orders ever since the country has ceased from active persecution. Christian schools have an arduous task before them, for Shintoism [4] is made to live in Japan, chiefly because the *Kunaisho*, or Ministry of the Imperial Palace, imposes it upon the Ministry of Educa-

[1] *Plan of Studies*, English translation of 1922 edition, Introduction, p. 5.
[2] Letter from Cochin to the Fathers of Europe, January 29th, 1552.
[3] Article in the *Month* for July 1914, written by Reverend Mother J. Erskine Stuart after a visit to Japan, at the request of Professor Mikami, the historian.
[4] Facts from the *Diocese of Nagasaki*, published at the Nazareth Press, Hong Kong, 1931.

tion, *Mombusho*, and thus creates in the majority of schools " aversion from Christianity which is depicted as both anti-patriotic and anti-scientific." [1] As 98 per cent. of the Japanese children go to school, the way of life opened to the youth of the country has, in the main, supplied but little bulwark against " the real dangers lurking in ultra-republicanism, in socialism of all brands, in communism, in Sovietism, and what not, which conspire to upset all authority and pretend to build up a new social system by levelling all ranks of society and by destroying all property rights in individuals." [2] An immense flood of Marxian literature has swept over the country of late. Nevertheless, " the influence of the Catholic Church cannot be measured exactly in Japan by the number of baptisms. . . . Christian ideas acting as a social leaven have already exerted a vast influence for good during these last fifty years." [3]

When the Society of the Sacred Heart went out to Japan in 1908 to add its humble labours to those of other congregations, it found that the Dames de St. Maur [4] had already been in the field since 1872, the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus [5] since 1877, the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, [6] and the Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres [7] since the closing years of the century, while they were to be followed

[1] Shintoism, however, is not exactly a religion in the strict sense of the word. It speaks to the heart of the nation as to a great family whose father is the Emperor. In religious matters, Buddhism comes to the fore—and in many ways Buddhism and Shintoism have mingled—of late years weddings have been held at Buddhist shrines—but the Buddhist funeral rites are different from those of the Shintoist with his worship of ancestors.

[2] *Diocese of Nagasaki.* [3] Ibid.

[4] They have houses in Yokohama, Tokyo, and elsewhere.

[5] Of Chauffailes. They have two houses in Nagasaki, two in Kobe, one each in Kyoto, Osaka, Kurume, and Kumamoto.

[6] They have houses in Sapporo (Hokkaido), in Kurume, Biwasaki, and Hitoyoshi (Kyushu).

[7] They have houses in Hakodate, Sendai, Morioka, Tokyo, and Yatsushiro.

by the Sisters of Nevers,[1] who arrived in 1922. Three Canadian Congregations which have lately come to Kyushu; Franciscan nuns, Spanish Mercedarias, and Esclavas del Sacramento now work on the main island; while the Dominicans and the Sisters of Notre Dame de Montréal work in the north. Of late years Japanese congregations have been established; one, at Nagasaki, was founded by two religious who had been trained in the Novitiate of the Society of the Sacred Heart at Marmoutier.

Beginning in Tokyo under the difficulties which must necessarily attend the work of nuns in a pagan land, of women trained in Western culture who have to adapt themselves to an Eastern setting, the religious found that they had something to give which this grateful and appreciative people were ready to accept. With efficient and well-equipped government schools growing up rapidly around them, many Japanese women could nevertheless see the value of the education offered them, under difficulties, by the convent schools. There was something about the aloofness of the cloistered religious, something about their manners and the symbolism which surrounded their way of life which attracted minds as refined and beauty loving as they are intelligent and penetrating. This *way* offered to the learner was based upon clear principles and was the cause of that serenity which had a peculiar appeal for youth trained to quieten its heart in meditation[2] and to practise self-control.

Although the days had long passed when the traditional reverence for the teacher found voice in the maxim: "Let not the pupil tread within three feet of his teacher's

[1] At Osaka.

[2] This is, or was, a regular exercise in Japanese schools. See article by Reverend Mother Stuart cited above.

shadow," nevertheless the respect given to the nuns greatly helped them to develop their schools. With the support of Count Terashima for general administration and of Mr. Shinoda, the Scholastic Promoter, the *Seishin Joshi Gakuin* (or assemblage of schools of the Sacred Heart) came to consist of a kindergarten (*Yochi-en*), a primary school (*Sho-Gakko*), a secondary school (*Koto-jo-Gakko*), a European (*Go-Gakko*),[1] and a normal school giving diplomas in English and Japanese language (*Semmon-Gakko*). It must be understood that the distinctions between the types of schools rest upon differences of age and curricula and do not relate to social rank.[2] The *Go-Gakko*, being planned for European children, or for Japanese who desire a completely Western upbringing, is not placed directly under government and follows, as far as possible, the plan of studies in an English convent of the Sacred Heart.

A description of the *Seishin Joshi Gakuin*, with the 760 pupils it houses within its walls, has been contributed by one who went out with the second colony of nuns and has since taught in the training college.[3]

"The first of January, of the Era of Showa is an auspicious day to speak of the field of work of the Society of the Sacred Heart in Japan. The air is mild, the sky blue, the ground moist now that the sun has melted the frost of early morn. Children and teachers and '*the Mothers*' are all taking part in a flag procession, the school colours lead-

[1] Since about 1923 the greater majority of the pupils in the *Go-Gakko* are Japanese.

[2] The nuns of the Sacred Heart have not yet been able to open a free elementary school in Japan, though they much desire to do so. They have at Kobe a primary and secondary school as in Tokyo, together with some supplementary courses. In China, at Shanghai they have opened a European boarding school and a free Chinese primary school.

[3] Notes sent to the author in 1934.

ing and hundreds of sturdy right hands waving the national flag. There is a mighty rustle as of thousands of sedges shaken in the wind, as the thin paper flutters, showing the blood-red orb on a white field. The blood of knights and doughty warriors poured out in loyalty to Emperor or feudal lord, and the virtues of citizens true to the high ideals of noble ancestors—all this is told by the flag. There is a wonderful blend of dignity and of truly democratic spirit. High birth and cultivated leisure are here, yet those clad in the fairest creations of loom and embroidery needle do not shrink from being neighbourly to the servant or the street-vendor. Are not all children of the Emperor, who has the love of a father for each of his 90,000,000 subjects, and who is descended in an unbroken line from the first Emperor, Jimmu, who reigned sixty years before the foundations of Rome! Therefore to-day, the children of *Seishin Gakuin* are but voicing a tiny fraction of the mighty joy that sways 90,000,000 hearts at the thought of the baby prince who lies on his silken quilts in the Imperial Palace and is to the whole people a pledge of hope and security. . . . Free dinners are being given to thousands of poor. Rice and rice-wine and tangerines are to gladden their hearts as do the search-lights and the star-led aeroplane, the old tradition and the modern invention. . . ."

"The beauties of nature are but mirrors in which the disciple should see the miracle of his own soul repeated," said the Japanese sage of old, and in the characteristic loneliness of Japanese landscape we may see a reflection of the world in the pagan soul. No wonder, then, that an education which can offer some cure for this loneliness will gather together many pupils. After this first glimpse of the *Seishin Gakuin*, it may be interesting to come down to the details of its organisation.

It has been said that the *Go-Gakko* is a school taught in English. There are some hundred children and a few Japanese graduates who remain on to perfect themselves in the English language. The plan of studies for the Society of the Sacred Heart is followed with slight modifications, one of which is the substitution of certificates for prizes, as these are more acceptable to the Japanese principle of learning for learning's sake.[1] Religion is regularly taught in the *Go-Gakko*, and thus many a Japanese pagan sits side by side with Christian children from England or France and learns to know the truth about the religion of Jesus Christ.

In the *Yochi-en* one finds oneself in a Japanese kindergarten, a happy place if, as it has been said: "Japan has the name of being the land of happy children."[2] Japan is certainly the land of happy baby faces and smiling eyes, the land of gentle manners which radiate a happiness all their own, the land of gorgeous colourful raiment, the land where they keep a Feast of Dolls! So while the *Yochi-en* may be said to be run on European lines, nevertheless, being a thoroughly Japanese school, it has its own characteristic spirit. Here little children under six years of age are prepared to enter the *Sho-Gakko* or primary schools whose curriculum covering six years of school life is minutely mapped out by the Ministry of Education. In the kindergarten the teachers enjoy comparative freedom, so there is a daily English lesson, and, what is of more importance for those who wish to attend it, a religious lesson inculcating the love of prayer and of self-conquest, the fear of God, and the horror of sin. One of the nuns is in charge of the *Yochi-en*, and she and her Japanese teachers gravely award

[1] Every school is expected to give a graduation certificate at the end of its course. 1. Kindergarten. 2. Primary School. 3. Secondary School. 4. Normal School. 5. Language School, or *Go-Gakko*. 6. *Senshuka* or Special Finishing Course.

[2] Article by Reverend Mother Stuart cited above.

"Graduation Certificates" to the six-year-old pupils who leave for the *Sho-Gakko*.

The Japanese curriculum and the textbooks for this primary department are the same all over the country for rich and poor alike, but the nuns at the *Seishin Gakuin* have special leave to teach English half an hour daily to the younger children, and for longer periods to the rest of the school. Most of the singing and drawing classes of the *Sho-Gakko* are taught by the nuns who preside at the recreations. Other subjects are taught by Japanese teachers. A large number of the children by their own choice attend religious instruction given daily by the nuns and by Catholic graduates from the normal school, and most of them pay a daily visit to the convent chapel.

After the six-year course of the *Sho-Gakko* the children enter the *Koto-Jo-Gakko*, or secondary school, in which there is a little more freedom as to the textbooks, although the curriculum and the number of hours to be devoted to each subject are uniform for all schools of the same grade.

In the *Koto-Jo-Gakko* there are, in the main, five hours of English every week. Western history is taught by one of the nuns who has a university degree, and other nuns teach drawing and painting to those who wish to learn foreign, rather than Japanese, art. The religious also preside over some of the recreations, as in the primary school, and give religious instruction to those who wish. The children in the *Koto-Jo-Gakko* have weekly notes for conduct, they keep the Superior's Feast as in all schools of the Society, offering their wishes to her on that day as at Christmas. They also take a large share in getting up the annual bazaar whose proceeds go towards the various charities to which the *Seishin Gakuin* subscribes. Thus in the secondary school one finds the traditional spirit of the children of the Sacred

Heart, a spirit which is largely fostered in the English lesson whose aim is to open windows in all directions and to enable the pupils to value the good points of Western culture. The girls are grouped according to their knowledge of the language, each division being known by the name of a flower, a practice which avoids emphasising the differences in natural aptitude; for who but the initiated could realise that the Plum Blossom and the Iris maidens meet on a scholastic basis! In the English classes, the girls are given some ideas of psychology and ethics, of Italian art, of Greek and Roman history, all "key-subjects" for those who would understand the Western mind. Even the dictations are chosen to stimulate thought, and still more so are the subjects for "literary meetings": "The eldest or the youngest of the family," "Turning a corner," "Beautiful white things," "Down a garden path." It might be a matter of surprise to hear that the Japanese schoolgirl appreciates Dickens, did one not remember that spirit of realism which so often peeps out of Japanese art, a spirit blent of minute observation, of humour, of pathos, of a certain restless love of the grotesque. This spirit it is which characterises Hokusai, the painter born in Yedo in 1760, who, having learned perspective and anatomy from the Dutch merchants in his native town, made himself the artist of the daily life of his people. Even in the older drawings, as on the scroll representing the old *Tokaido*, or road, by which the feudal aristocracy of Shogun times came with all their retinues to do homage to their overlords, "The work is delicate as a miniature painting," says a critic,[1] "or as figures in mediæval illuminations, and full of spirit. Every condition of human life is represented and every mode of locomotion in use at the time. . . . Here, in

[1] Reverend Mother Stuart in the article cited above.

the old road, all classes and all incidents in human life are met . . . each group intent on its own end, My Lord's retinue intent on My Lord, the bonze on his meditation, the family on its joys and sorrows."

The upper forms of the *Koto-Jo-Gakko* usually go once a term on a school excursion with a teacher to a mountain or a mine or a famous view, to study geology or mineralogy or landscape or colour. Thus they visited the chief historical sites and temples of Nara and Kyoto. The class journey has, in addition to its educational value, the advantage of knitting yet more closely the bonds of fellowship and so setting up a new friendliness out of harness. One or more nights are usually spent in the train.

One autumn the Public Health Officers gave a three hours' entertainment to the girls of the primary and of the secondary school in order to urge them to reasonable care of their health, which is liable to be injured by the appliances for dyeing the hair, painting the face, and such-like arts. They dwelt upon the simple means used formerly by the families of the Samurai Warrior class, who preserved health by scrupulous cleanliness, by taking part in the housework, and by partaking of a good deal of seaweed with their food. Sometimes lectures on the Era of Meiji given by officers of the army or navy held the girls enthralled, as did a series on the "Mystery of Manchuria," where the glamour of Chinese brigands probably lifted the topic above the more humdrum subject of "the housing problem" or "the influence of great and good women in home and society," a subject as old and as fresh as girls' schools.

In the normal school, or *Semmon-Gakko* [1] there is a year's

[1] Some years ago there was a larger percentage of Christians in the *Semmon-Gakko* than in any other department of the *Seishin Gakuin*. At present the *Go-Gakko* has the highest percentage.

preparatory course (*Yoka*) and there is a regular course (*Honka*) covering three years. This has an English side (*Eibunka*) and a Japanese side (*Kokubunka*). After this comes graduation, but those who wish may follow a post-graduate course.

On the English side the subjects taught are: grammar, phonetics, elocution, composition, literature, history (mediæval and modern), history of art, science (mainly to illustrate English scientific terms), psychology, ethics, and history of philosophy—the last-named making the widest appeal. All these subjects are taught by nuns, while Japanese professors teach Japanese language and translation, Chinese (which includes the reading of Chinese classics by the Japanese way known as *Kanbun*), Japanese literature and art, sociology, and ethics.[1] These last two subjects are taught all the way up the primary, secondary, and normal schools according to the regulations of the Imperial Rescript on Education of the Emperor Meiji,[2] and are based on the principles of Confucius and the Eastern philosophers, the main end being the patriotic soul and good family life of a "true Japanese." Pedagogy is taught both by nuns and professors.

On the Japanese side of the normal school, only three hours weekly can be given to the English classes taught by the nuns. A Japanese religious teaches foreign history, geography, and philosophy, and as the Society gets more Japanese nuns it will be able to take over more of the teaching in the native tongue. The eight or ten nuns who

[1] In 1934 a meeting of over a thousand headmistresses of secondary schools discussed the curriculum. As much time was being spent on the learning of Chinese characters and the study of Western languages and civilisation was suffering, the question of subjects, correlation, and the advantages and disadvantages of specialist teachers were considered.

[2] This is read with ceremony two or three times in the year and kept in a place of honour in a special room.

have entered from Tokyo are for the most part still undergoing training and the want of native help has naturally retarded progress in a land which has such an efficient school system and demands so high a standard of scholarship. The *Seishin Joshi Gakuin* has, however, earned praise for the excellence of its English studies and for its wide European curriculum. It can now confer, in addition to English certificates, diplomas enabling the holders to teach the Japanese language in primary and secondary schools, and even to assume the headship of a *Koto-Jo-Gakko*, or middle school. Candidates who wish to teach other subjects must sit for an external examination. On the other hand, the Certificate of the normal school gives a right of entry into any university which admits women.

The students of the *Semmon-Gakko* practise teaching English in a class of thirty boys which comes twice a week from a neighbouring elementary school. Their Japanese lessons are given in the *Sho-Gakko*. They are taken by their professors to observe teaching in other schools, or to visit places of historical interest, or again to hear lectures at different universities. At one of these they heard with much appreciation Mr. Laurence Binyon speaking on early English landscape painters, at another Mr. Tsubouchi expounding Shakespeare in Japanese, and in the same language they heard the message of the Dante Society.

The girls of the *Semmon-Gakko* also have their debates, arguing for and against the motion that "Distance lends enchantment to the view," or that "The machine is the ruin of social life," often enough adducing the authorities for either point of view, and, Japanese-way, stopping short of a conclusion.

As in the far-away days of St. Cyr, so now in twentieth-century Tokyo, some of the girls of the *Semmon-Gakko*

remain in the convent to teach in one or other department. Others of the past pupils find posts in Government schools, others again, as wives of members of the diplomatic service or of great business companies, put to good use the English they have learned at the *Seishin Gakuin*, as well as all the other subjects of which that language has been the channel. A wide horizon has been opened out for many, enabling them to convey a message of hope, of good fellowship, of right thoughts of God, to those who without their help would sit in unspeakable loneliness in the very shadow of death. Much social work lies open to the graduates of the *Semmon-Gakko*, whether it be by encouraging native manufactures, contributing to charitable institutions, translating and diffusing good books, or working in the college settlement. This seeks to relieve the misery in those suburbs which have sprung up round Tokyo as around Paris. The Morning Star Society, or *Ake No Hoshi*, represents an attempt among women to take a share in Catholic action, and the Catholic graduates of the *Semmon-Gakko* are among its most staunch adherents.

All through the school the " loveliness of perfect service " is brought out by many a charitable work. The " Consolation Bags " to soldiers in action are packed with much enthusiasm, but the deepest love goes to that Leper Colony, patronised by the Dowager Empress who once showed her affection by a gift of 150 maple trees from the Imperial Gardens together with seven poems of her own composition! The girls of the *Go-Gakko* are more modern, but hardly less Japanese, when they write in their college magazine : " We packed our Christmas love and sympathy, between surprise packages and cigarettes."[1]

[1] *The Robin of the Sacred Heart*, September 1933. The normal and secondary schools each have their chronicle in Japanese.

From this magazine we can gather many details concerning the life at *Seishin Gakuin*, finding always strong points of resemblance beneath the vast difference that severs East from West. What Western schoolgirl could say so gracefully: "For the continued joy of new basket ball and tennis court we are indeed most grateful," or again: "For the appreciated drama with its beautiful songs, scenes, and theme, so graciously interpreted, we are indeed thankful."

It will be seen from this last remark that the Japanese schoolgirl acts plays as did her French predecessor, the drama *Shukan-No-Musume* and the operetta *Toyshop* being mentioned in the magazine for September 1933. From this same source we hear that the girls learn about the world's famous buildings as if the desire for general information was still part of their educational tradition. They play "Brigands," and write charming phantasies on such subjects as "a Regular Polygon," and show much alertness of mind and width of interest.

In the national scheme of education, the Society of the Sacred Heart has been able to fit itself harmoniously, bringing its own gifts and messages, making a special appeal to the Japanese love of self-restraint and of perfect service. A letter, lately sent by the Superior of the convent to the graduates dispersed throughout Japan, will show how real the message and how fearlessly it may be spoken:

"My dear Graduates,

"I have been asked to send you a little word for your annual publication and I am very happy to offer you a very affectionate message from all the Mothers of the Seishin Gakuin who never forget you though they do not see you very often. You are becoming so large a body now scattered throughout the world and responsible for a younger

generation growing up in your houses, and we cannot but feel you are and ought to be a power in society with an influence that must be more marked each year, as your number and experience increase. And so I cannot but urge you to make it an influence for good that will be a bulwark against the spirit of insubordination, discontent, and utter disregard for what is high, noble and beautiful that seems to be sweeping round the world just now and is already felt in this country. Let us be resolved to maintain a united front in upholding a true standard of what is right and fitting, in maintaining respect for and willing obedience to authority, as well as fidelity to duty and habits of daily self-sacrifice in small things.

"If we keep united in this one aim we shall be able to do much to help in difficult times. Although a woman's influence must always be more or less hidden, the future of Japan will depend largely upon what her women are—her mothers and daughters will mould the spirit of the nation in the future just as much as they have formed her great men in the past—and all who have a right to judge tell us it is great men we want.

"The shaping of our own times on high principles will be our best means of helping in this great cause—and moreover we each of us and even the youngest and the weakest, have the power of prayer at our command. No prayer is left unheard, and as 'nothing is impossible to God' so nothing will be too difficult for her who puts all her trust in God."[1]

This is surely a call which every graduate can understand, a reminder of the excellence of self-restraint and the loveliness of perfect service.

[1] Letter of June 9th, 1933.

Chapter VIII

CONCLUSION

"The spirit of this Society is essentially based upon prayer and the interior life."[1]

On September 12th, 1934, a ceremony took place in the Basilica of St. Peter's in Rome; the unveiling of Quattrini's statue of St. Madeleine Sophie. In the heart of Christendom, among the founders and foundresses of religious Orders, stands our Saint, strong and prayerful. A child, on one side, symbolises her educational work, an angel, on the other, stands for the life of prayer which she established as the fundamental principle of her Order.

Indeed, whoever would enter into the inward spirit of the Society of the Sacred Heart must understand the value and all-pervading influence of the life of prayer. This it is which explains the rule of enclosure, which accounts for a characteristic aloofness often adversely criticised in the Society as a whole. When one understands that prayer is the essential basis of life in a religious congregation, one is not surprised to find that the members are not selected for natural gifts, nor bound together by workaday interests. On the contrary, to-day, as in the days when Christ walked the shores of the Lake of Galilee, the call to follow Him is flung out to souls of varying outlook and endowment. And as, in those far-off times, one man left his nets and the other his counting table, and yet another came from his musings under the fig tree, so, nowadays, the response is made from many different quarters, and by people of very different characters.

The child who gazes up at St. Madeleine Sophie in St. Peter's has its counterpart in various pictures of the Saint, though the nationality changes with the country,

[1] Constitutions of the Society of the Sacred Heart.

so that we have now a sturdy little English maiden, now a bright-eyed Japanese. All know well that they may claim the Saint's interest and affection, for did she not dream of sending her daughters over all the world?

Much more might have been said in this book to show how truly the dream of Madeleine Sophie Barat has been realised to-day. For instance, a study in well-knit organisation might be made in connection with the Society's Schools in Australia and New Zealand, together with its University College in Sydney. Thought-provoking comparisons might be drawn between the literary and social activities of the old pupils of these schools and of those in England to-day. Or again, in Cairo and Heliopolis one could see how girls are brought up to face Oriental seclusion and leisure. Arabic, French, and English literature, history of art, and every form of manual work appeal to the Egyptians, while the lure of astronomy and philosophy has fascinated them since the dawning years of history. Another subject for investigation would be the work in the Belgian Congo, where nuns teach the elements of civilisation to native pupils or gather together the children of European colonists. Lastly, and at the other end of the scale, one might survey the higher studies undertaken by members of the Society or by their pupils in the universities of many lands, did one not realise that the realm of specialisation hardly allows of general treatment. The educational tradition of the Society has been considered in its secondary schools, where it prepares the students for the higher paths of learning. It is, as has been said again and again, an essentially humanistic tradition, closely in touch with the realities of life and giving to the mind a certain co-ordination and oneness, a background and outlook, fostering judgment and taste. This education, which imprints a

stamp upon personal work, leaves the individual free to develop each in her own way, for "the growing point of the spiritual life is determined by our individuality."[1]

Having then reviewed the growth of the Tradition, the handing on and development of the inheritance of the past, one may consider, by way of conclusion, some of the inner principles which give it a character all its own, some of the needs which it feels at the present moment, and again what future, if any, lies before it.

If one were to consider what is the essential element which differentiates a living tradition from a fetish or code of minute observances, surely one would be forced to say that it is some kind of vision. Vision makes the details of life fall into their place; it gives balance and poise, the prerequisites of movement. Where there is a long, steady, upward gaze, there can be no puerile clinging to unessentials, no worship of minutiæ, or of custom for custom's sake.

It would seem that it is the absence of vision which makes so dismal some of the educational writings of the day, some of those dreary school-memoirs that fasten upon unessentials, and have no understanding of the fact that a noble aim may often engender a certain carelessness regarding the unimportant details of daily life. Every old institution gathers into its life a number of traditional customs, certain terms peculiar to itself, certain ways of acting that may seem strange enough and even absurd to the uninitiated, but which are taken for granted by those who, intent upon a goal, cannot be for ever reviewing the details of their mode of travel.

That a real danger of narrow-mindedness besets the lovers of a tradition, no one could deny. It is apt to ensnare

[1] John Adams.

those most devoted to a school, a college, or a system, as the following lines imply. They are taken from a Commencement address given by the Superior of Manhattanville College to a large gathering of past and present scholars in June 1933:[1] "We should distinguish between essential and accidental traditions, the first growing out of fundamental principles, the second loved and delightful for many reasons, perhaps, but too dependent on time and circumstance to be unchanging. A few of our 'old children' make the mistake of deploring changes in these latter as if they meant the tumbling down of an entire beloved structure. The greater number by far, however, realise that we to-day try to do, not what St. Madeleine Sophie did in 1850, but what she would do to-day were she facing the problems which are ours. For the educational principles of St. Madeleine Sophie are based upon changeless truths. . . . Accidentals may, indeed must, change to meet changed conditions, but truth, despite Protagoras and Bergson, is not relative, and it is on truth and on the capacity of the human mind to attain to it that St. Madeleine Sophie built her educational system."

This system, it would seem, will be carried out most fully in those places where the Order may best adapt itself to the circumstances of time and place; the more perfect the adjustment the more complete will be the development.

Every living, growing entity has its own characteristic needs that spring from the very nature of its being. The most fundamental need of a Teaching Order, at the present time, seems to be the freedom to remain itself. A Catholic parent has a right to expect from a convent school a type of education well described in an address read by Mrs. F. J.

[1] *The Tower Postscript*, College of the Sacred Heart, Manhattanville.

Sheed before the *Association of Convent Schools*[1]: "I have asked myself what I, as a Catholic mother, would demand of a Catholic school, and why I should want to send my child to one. If I sent her to a convent it would be because she could get something there which she could not get at home, namely, a Catholic life, lived to the full in a completely Catholic atmosphere, with the companionship of the nuns and the other Catholic children. . . . I should look to a child learning much from people who are consecrated to God in a special way, and I think that is what you cannot give a child at home. . . . Religion should be the most important subject and all the mistresses should regard it so. It should be supremely well taught, and no person who is less good as a teacher in the school should be allowed to teach religion. . . . You want to build up for children an enormous Catholic tradition."

These are words that cannot but find an echo in the heart of nuns who wish to maintain this Catholic atmosphere at any cost, and indeed look upon it as a first need. But no educational work is possible to-day without another requisite, namely, the scholarship that will secure for religious teachers the influence they ought to exert. For scholarship, a Teaching Order must be ready to pay a high price. Scholarship is only gained by patiently measuring oneself against an outside standard, and that of the best. It demands stability in organisation, long years of training, the use of libraries; it depends upon good teachers, upon contact with other minds. By opening houses in many university cities, the Society of the Sacred Heart is showing that it recognises these needs. As an International Order, it has enormous possibilities. Already the American houses are sending nuns to be trained at Oxford, and the recent

[1] At the Conference held at New Hall, Chelmsford, in May 1932.

foundation in Louvain offers facilities for study which should be valued in every land. The Society is ever alive to the duty of keeping worldliness from its doors; but the serious study pursued in universities need not take away from its essentially inward spirit. On the contrary, it may deepen vision and enrich the tradition in many ways.

Teaching orders of women are to-day, perhaps more than at any other time, in need of recruits to meet the pressing claims of modern life. There is an idea, which dies hard, that nuns influence the girls under their care to cast their lot among them. This is not true; witness these lines, written with great acumen, on the subject of religious vocation, by an old pupil: "There is an impression, among those who know us least, that the chief aim of convent education is to entice young girls into the cloister, and that the glamour cast upon convent life frequently achieves this end. One who has been educated in a convent might well reply: 'But a net is spread in vain in the eyes of them that have wings.' For if there is anything more calculated to frighten off the average pleasure-loving schoolgirl, it is certainly the daily life of self-sacrifice of the nuns, among whom she lives during her girlhood.

"The pupil at a convent school—especially at a convent boarding-school—gets an excellent view of the outward aspect of a nun's life, and she does not have much opportunity of probing to its source the inner and spiritual happiness which alone redeems the religious life from a monotony unattractive to pleasure-seeking human nature. She sees the nuns clad day after day and year after year in the same religious habit, with its sombre restraint upon every feminine instinct of adornment and variety. She sees them unable to indulge various personal likings and tastes. . . . She knows that they habitually rise very early, to

spend much time in prayer even before morning Mass. She sees them hard at work every day and all day, at the same round of duties; and when she goes home for the holidays she leaves them behind her, and knows that for them there will be no holiday outings, . . . such as the relaxations to which she looks forward with so much pleasure. On the other hand, life in the world beckons to her with all the glamour of the unknown. Unless she happens to be one of a large family, the cares and responsibilities of married life are almost a sealed book to her. Life-after-school pictures itself to the average girl as a protracted holiday. When she is home from school, everything is done to make her happy; she has all the pleasures of home life, and very few of its duties. How then is it possible for the religious life, with which she is so familiar in its everyday aspect, to retain for her any glamour in comparison with that which is inevitably shed upon an unknown future in the world, replete with radiant possibilities? The only possible explanation of the development and persistence of a religious vocation in any convent-bred girl lies in the realm of the supernatural."[1]

Many problems and difficulties beset the teaching congregations to-day, and they need the strength that comes from united action. The associations of Convent Schools which in England, Holland, Germany, in Australia and the States, unite together nuns from different orders, are fruitful in opening up new possibilities, and in organising a concerted policy. In the summer-schools, which are held each year in a different convent, much interchange of ideas can take place, and the basis can be laid of co-operation and helpful intercourse.

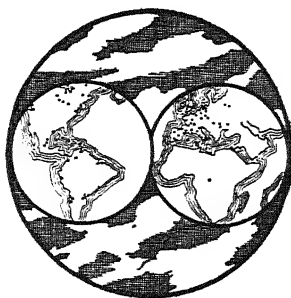
No one can afford to remain in isolation, while much can be gained by contact with other minds; for this reason the

[1] *Schoolday Memories*, Mary Catherine Goulter, pp. 47–9.

ecclesiastical authorities are everywhere encouraging the close inter-action of convent schools as of other types of Catholic action.

Such are some of the needs of the living tradition depicted in the pages of this book. What will be its future? The closing paragraph of Reverend Mother Stuart's book, *The Society of the Sacred Heart*, ends with a message of hope. "Of all virtues that religious can least afford to lose hold of in our times, that of hope seems the most needed. Dismal things are often said as to the future of religious life in the modern world. Some think that the existing orders cannot keep their footing, that they will have to pass away and give place to other forms of good, 'better adapted to the ideas of to-day.' Those who know religious orders from within cannot accept these dark prophecies. In many ways indeed it would seem that the world never had such need of religious as in our own times. The world is weary of vain endeavours to deal with its own hunger and emptiness of soul. It resents the assurance that the religious have, in the way of renunciation, the very thing which it vainly seeks in pursuing its own aims. Yet it is irresistibly attracted towards these centres of an 'other-worldly' life. Fiction shows it, though it shows also how little the religious life is known. Poetry shows it, with a wistfulness that seems to long to understand more. Even bitter attacks show it, baffled as they are and striving again and again to blacken that which bears witness against them. Political violence or legal persecution affirm it more clearly than anything else. If religious are out of tune with their times, why not let them die out quietly as every worn out institution dies?

"But—we know that there is a heavenly vigour in these germs and these old, deeply rooted stocks. We cannot

fail to know that we have a message to give, and still more a power to exercise by prayer and sacrifice which is a force that the Church counts upon beyond all earthly help. We know that saints are wanted to leaven the world, that there are saints already leavening it, but that, if religious are true to their vocation and spirit, they are in the very school where saints are made. And if we know nothing of the future it is for that very reason, that we may the more trust God not to let His work be in vain ; and, if He allows some doors to be closed, to open others. For we believe that He makes no little account of all faithful devotion, and we cannot doubt that He has a use for every life that has dedicated its powers to His glory and service."

EPILOGUE

MATER ADMIRABILIS

Mater Admirabilis

Epilogue

MATER ADMIRABILIS

In the Roman convent of the Trinità dei Monti in the year 1844, a French postulant, Pauline Perdrau, was working at a fresco in one of the ancient cloisters. Below the ladder on which she stood, a group of little girls were eagerly holding up palettes and brushes, thus all unconsciously co-operating in the creation of a work of art. Mother Perdrau has left the names of these children [1]: the two Resetti; the two Pacca, nieces of the cardinal of that name; and future nuns of the Sacred Heart, the Mothers Isoard, Englefield, and Bentivoglio.

The postulant was learning much concerning the outlook of the Society from the group of children at her feet. She marvelled as she listened to their enthusiastic comments on the visit of Mother Barat to their Roman convent. These little girls had never seen the Mother Foundress, nevertheless they had been taught by their mistresses to look upon her as their friend, interested in all, especially in the younger children, and they had already taken her to their hearts.

Little did these children realise how much they were teaching their young mistress concerning the Society to which she aspired to dedicate her life. Already its ideals and its spirit had caught hold of her, luring her from artistic studies in Rome to the prosaic details of the work of education. New aspirations were upon her, seeking expression in painting, the mother-tongue of her soul and, though unskilled in frescoes, she was striving to give life to her conception of the ideals set before the children of the

[1] *Les Loisirs de l'Abbaye, Souvenirs Inédits de la Mère Pauline Perdrau.*

Sacred Heart. Her hand seemed guided with a wondrous skill as in the setting of the old cloister she produced a new Madonna, Mary, as she must have been in the last year of her girlhood.

Seated upon a chair in the foreground of one of the halls of the temple, the Virgin is absorbed in prayer. Her hands which but a moment ago were busied with the distaff now rest gently upon her lap. A lily by her side speaks of the purity of her musings, an open book is a fitting symbol for her whom men have called "the Seat of Wisdom." In the background, the dawn is breaking over gently rising hills, a dawn, mysterious and full of hope, heralding an unseen presence and a destiny.

There is about the picture an extraordinary restfulness combined with a feeling of intensity. The poise, the readiness, the perfect self-possession of the solitary figure, "express as in a mirror the beauty of chastity and the loveliness of self-government,"[1] but it is especially the face that gives the impression of peaceful energy, for the cheeks are slightly flushed as with the intensity of thought and purpose, while the downcast eyes give an effect of heavenly serenity. Those eyes are ready at any moment to turn themselves upon the onlooker, while the colour in Our Lady's cheeks seems almost to ebb and flow under our gaze. A modern writer has said: "Mary's whole personality is summed up in this painting, which has about it all the attractiveness of a primitive work of art. It will perhaps remain the most complete, the most profound and the most touching representation of Our Lady which the hand of man has ever produced."[2]

These are bold words concerning a painting which is

[1] St. Ambrose, *The Book upon Virgins*, Book ii.
[2] *L'Humble Vierge Marie*, P. Louis Perroy, p. 20.

primitive in many respects, as the first fresco of an artist must necessarily be. Yet, in spite of its somewhat crude colouring and of the fact that details in dress and furniture bear too obviously the stamp of the period, *Mater Admirabilis*, as the picture became known, quickly attracted reverent attention from high and low. Numberless favours were obtained by those who prayed before the picture, Pope Pius IX himself came to bless it, ecclesiastics of every rank asked to celebrate Mass before it, and gradually the little shrine became a regular place of pilgrimage.

To-day *Mater Admirabilis* has a shrine in the Lady Chapel or in the Cloisters of every convent of the Sacred Heart. To the children the painting speaks of delicate and intangible realities which they must guard and cherish as a precious tradition, while to the nuns it stands as the expression of their life of mingled work and prayer.

Mater Admirabilis has a book at her feet. May this one also find a resting place there. In her hands she holds the thread from her distaff. May she hold too, the Golden Thread of the Tradition, whose rise and development has been traced throughout these pages. If she keep it, all will be well.

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